n° 91
February 1993

# EMERGENCY

# Refugees

UNHCR

# C O N T

# F O C U S

## Emergencies


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**Refugees** is published by the Public Information Service of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The opinions expressed by contributing editors are not necessarily those of UNHCR. The designations used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

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English and French editions printed in Switzerland by Roto-Sadag SA, Geneva.
Circulation: 200,000 in English, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

*ISSN 0252-791 X*


**Cover Photo:** Terrified civilians take cover during fighting near Osijek, Croatia.
Photo: J.-C. Coutausse - Contact / Looks.

# Can a UN bureaucracy deal with emergencies ?

A United Nations bureaucracy involved in emergency operations may seem like a contradiction in terms, but it has become an increasingly common role for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

In northern Iraq and ex-Yugoslavia, UNHCR staff members have found themselves doing everything from distributing blankets and baby food to organizing airlifts and planning and leading road convoys.

This hands-on role has sparked considerable debate within UNHCR as well as in the humanitarian relief community at large.

As one senior staff member puts it: "We at UNHCR are a bureaucratic organization trying to be as operational..." as possible. Others add that UNHCR must take a more active role — the very nature of humanitarian emergencies demands it. Lives depend on it.

Of all UN agencies, UNHCR is probably the most operational. But it has not always been this way.

Created in the aftermath of World War II, UNHCR's governing statute did not foresee direct assistance to refugees. Instead, the office's role was defined as "searching for lasting solutions" to refugee problems, and its operational role was limited to "facilitating the coordination of the efforts of private organizations who deal with the welfare of refugees."

In "classic" refugee situations, the actual work on the ground has been the responsibility of either host governments or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). UNHCR's traditional role has been to fund some or most of the assistance, to supervise the program, to control the finances and to provide technical advice.

But as refugee situations became ever more complex and dramatic, UNHCR was compelled to become more operational.

Over the years, with political upheavals in Africa, Asia and Central America forcing whole communities into flight, UNHCR has had to adapt to situations in which food, water and shelter had to be provided quickly to people in remote areas. Often, these refugees were perceived as a security threat by receiving countries, complicating even further UNHCR's work.

The crises which prompted UNHCR to set up its first emergency unit were the influx of Cambodians into Thailand in late 1979, and the boat people exodus from Vietnam. Initially a three-person team, the emergency unit drew up preparedness guidelines for emergencies, including the Emergency Handbook, and created training programs for staff.

But UNHCR's experience in Central America in the 1980s was a turning point in its operational capacity. With entire communities fleeing massive human rights abuses and settling precariously in remote and hostile border areas, UNHCR offices in the region had to be bold and imaginative in carrying out their work. Protection, the cornerstone of that work, became actual physical protection as UNHCR field officers established a 24-hour presence in the camps, often under very trying circumstances. For the first time, UNHCR established an office in the country of origin to better monitor the fate of those who chose voluntary repatriation. Returnees were accompanied by UNHCR staff as they made their way home.

In both Central America and South-east Asia, the keys to success were flexibility and adaptability to changing situations. Thanks to a flexible mandate, UNHCR was able to become more operational as the situation warranted.

The end of the Cold War brought calls from the international community for UNHCR to become even more operational. Donor states became more worried about North-South problems, such as massive migrations, than about East-West tensions. "As governments substitute humanitarian intervention for political action, we're being called upon to be more effective than we've ever been before," says Eric Morris, Deputy Director for the Division of Programs, Support, Budget and Finance.

In 1989, the member states of UNHCR's Executive Committee urged the organization to step up its early warning activities, and improve emergency staffing and stockpiling procedures. A year later, the Executive Committee recognized that the High Commissioner needed more flexibility to ensure funding in emergencies. In February 1991, it approved an increase of the Emergency Fund from $10 million to $20 million. It also authorized, within that new ceiling, up to $6 million for any one emergency.

Although UNHCR had been confronted with major refugee emergencies since the late 1970s, the Kurdish crisis in the spring of 1991 was unprecedented both in scope and in international interest. According to many observers within and outside the organization, UNHCR staff arrived on the scene of the emergency too slowly, in insufficient numbers, and with inadequate experience.

UNHCR's own review of the operation noted: "In the Persian Gulf, UNHCR's capacity to act quickly and decisively was limited by the absence of structures, systems and procedures designed to meet the specific needs of an emergency."

Previous proposals to set up emergency procedures had often gone unimplemented. But the magnitude of the Kurdish emergency prompted newly appointed High Commissioner Sadako Ogata to forcefully push for the implementation of concrete proposals for the quick mobilization of funds, of personnel, and for the prepositioning of relief items. In short, she called for the mobilization of the entire organization for effective emergency response.

The old emergency unit was revamped. The new unit, renamed the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section, became operational in February 1992. Its role is to develop resources and tools to enhance the capacity of the Regional Bureaus to respond to emergencies.

While the new Emergency Section represents a major step forward, it is only one element of the overall response. Its range of action is squeezed between the political decision-making process (the first phase of emergency response) and the longer-term emergency operation itself (the third phase). The Emergency Section is not meant to have control over the first or the third phase.

The section's most important innovation was the placement of specific staff and resources on standby at all times. As Janet Lim, chief of the new section, put it: "Before, we had no bodies on standby to send to the field

***Somali refugees at Mandera border site, Kenya.***
PHOTO: UNHCR / P. MOUMTZIS

in an emergency. Now we do."

These "bodies" include five newly appointed Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers (EPROs) at the senior level who act as a "fire brigade." Each is responsible for a particular geographical area. In the event of an emergency, they are deployed immediately to the field as leaders for the Emergency Response Teams. They are responsible for setting up the structure and systems to ensure the smooth running of the emergency operation.

Some 20 staff members make up the teams. Team members, although assigned to posts in various locations, are always on standby for emergency missions. Another 40 staff members are part of an Emergency Roster that can be drawn from when required. Specialists in logistics, nutrition, health, water, sanitation, site planning and other areas are also on call in the initial stages of an emergency.

With UNHCR's human resources overstretched, there is also provision for the secondment of external personnel. One successful innovation has been a standby arrangement with the Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils, used for the first time in the Gulf crisis. It provides for the rapid deployment of large numbers of experienced technical staff within 72 hours of an emergency.

UNHCR also maintains a computerized roster of over 500 technical consultants who can be called into an emergency when national technical experts in the host country cannot be found.

UNHCR has also entered into an agreement with the Swedish Rescue Services Board (SRB), the civil defense branch of the Swedish army. SRB personnel can be seconded to UNHCR on very short notice for a period of three to four weeks to set up living, transport, office, communications and medical facilities for UNHCR staff, freeing them to deal with the job at hand.

UNHCR is also working on an agreement with the United Nations Volunteers to make available specialized staff for emergencies.

As for stockpiling, UNHCR has established a centrally controlled emergency reserve to provide basic relief supplies to 50,000 beneficiaries at short notice. Supplementing this reserve system are standby agreements with NGOs and inter-governmental organizations which give UNHCR priority access to relief supplies whenever needs exceed the capacity of the central emergency stockpile. Items chosen for stockpiling are usually those that require a long lead time between the placement of a purchase order and arrival in-country, such as tents, tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, blankets, kitchen sets, water and sanitation equipment, communications equipment, and Rub Hall warehouses. Items with shelf-lives of less than a year are excluded.

Contingency planning is another important aspect of emergency response. How many refugees will cross the border? Where will they cross? How many staff will be required? What kind of assistance, and how much, will the refugees need? While answering these questions may merely involve a set of mathematical assumptions, many of the best contingency plans are doomed from the start because governments — particularly potential host governments — are reluctant to listen to, let alone PLAN, for bad news. "It's like a patient on his deathbed," said one staff member. "He'll refuse to write a will for fear that it will make him die sooner."

In practice, the entire emergency package is seldom if ever used in its entirety. Each emergency is different and only some elements of the package are chosen, like goods off a shelf in a supermarket. One exception was the recent Kenya-Somalia cross-border operation, where practically the whole package was used, including,

***Iraqi refugees at Çukurça border camp, May 1991.***
PHOTO: UNHCR / A. HOLLMANN

for the first time, the logistical support of the Swedish Rescue Services Board.

The agreed definition of an emergency is "a life-threatening situation where existing resources can't cope." But exactly who interprets all of the early warning signs and actually determines when existing resources aren't enough is open to question. While people in the field would seem to be in the best position to judge that things are getting out of hand, they often are too absorbed in the demands of their daily work to recognize the tell-tale signs. And sometimes they are reluctant to admit that the situation is getting out of control. The same goes for headquarters. Says Daniel Bellamy, head of desk for Central and Eastern Europe: "In UNHCR, we don't think, we act. That is because our staff is too tied up with daily tasks to have time to think ahead. We need to free some of our staff to do just that: think. But how do you explain that to donor governments?"

All too often, UNHCR finds itself reacting to outside pressure, usually via the media, before declaring an emergency.

Other cases are identified internally — sometimes too late. In February 1991, for example, Bhutanese refugees began arriving in Nepal, many in extremely poor health. By the spring of 1992, their numbers had reached 50,000, but the world was preoccupied with emergencies in ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere and largely ignored the brewing crisis in Nepal. Only after UNHCR's Geneva-based technical and program staff learned of exceptionally high mortality rates among the refugees was Nepal placed on the emergency agenda in mid-April 1992. Unfortunately, by the time UNHCR's senior epidemiologist was sent to the field, it was early June and between 1,200 and 1,500 preventable deaths had occurred.

The tragically late response in Nepal points to the need for managers to pay more attention to technical reports produced by UNHCR's Program and Technical Support Section, especially those issued by the water, sanitation, medical and nutrition specialists.

It often takes time for UNHCR to declare an emergency because such policy decisions must sometimes be coordinated with donor governments and/or the Secretary-General's office in New York. UNHCR's review of lessons learned from the Gulf crisis recommended the establishment of "a formal mechanism... enabling senior management at headquarters to declare that an emergency exists, thereby triggering a set of accelerated procedures relating to the commitment of expenditure, the mobilization of human and material resources and the identification of operational partners." But some experts argue that it is precisely this lack of a formal mechanism which enables UNHCR to remain flexible and to react quickly to an emergency.

The cross-border operation from Kenya to Somalia, designed to stem the flow of Somali refugees, is a good example of the time lag between the the declaration of an emergency and actually sending in the emergency teams. The cross-border idea was raised for the first time in February of this year, found impractical for security reasons, and taken up again in June. Yet, for a variety of reasons, including the difficulty in obtaining a security go-ahead from UN Headquarters in New-York, the decision to proceed was not made until the end of September. Once the green light was given, it took only five days for the first emergency teams to arrive.

Every day, the Emergency Section is exploring new ways to enhance UNHCR's response capacity. It has already built up, along with the Evaluation Unit, an impressive body of lessons learned. Areas which need improvement include the availability of staff for emergencies and better living conditions in the field. Too often, it is difficult to get supervisors to release Emergency Roster staff, and junior, inexperienced people are deployed instead. It is also difficult to find experienced administrative staff.

Can a UN bureaucracy deal with emergencies? One is tempted to answer: In PRINCIPLE, no. But UNHCR is more than a UN bureaucracy. As a recent Washington Post article noted: "UNHCR stands out from the rest of the UN agencies because it deals with life-and-death situations." The very nature of UNHCR's work over the years has forced it to become ever more flexible — to make the rules as it goes along, so to speak.

UNHCR's revamped Emergency Section is simply one more step in that direction. More should follow.

**SYLVIE GIRARD**

# Department of Humanitarian Affairs Strengthens UN's Emergency Response

Today, we are witnessing an explosion of ethnic and civil conflicts, where many societies are torn between demands for autonomy or self-determination and face the danger of fragmentation.

This, together with the vicious circle of poverty, population pressures and environmental degradation, requires an increasing involvement by the United Nations in the humanitarian field. And it is in this field that the United Nations has taken a major step forward in the last year.

The adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/182 on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the United Nations, sets out the basic principles for humanitarian assistance to be provided by the organization, and recommends specific measures to ensure a prompt and coordinated response to complex emergencies and natural disasters.

Accordingly, in April this year, the Secretary-General established a new Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), and appointed Mr. Jan Eliasson as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and the Emergency Relief Coordinator. DHA has the responsibility for providing a rapid and well-coordinated response to major and complex emergencies in order to save lives and contribute to rehabilitation and development for the affected populations. The Department incorporates the former UNDRO as well as former emergency units for Africa, Iraq and South East Asia.

Resolution 46/182 provides the United Nations with four instruments for coordination: the Office of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the Central Emergency Revolving Fund, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Consolidated Appeals Process. These instruments enhance the capacity of the United Nations to respond promptly in complex emergency situations with an effective division of labor between the executing agencies.

DHA operates in the grey zone where security, political and humanitarian concerns converge. Policy coordination, policy planning and early warning functions are performed in New York, where DHA works closely with the deliberative organs of the United Nations and with the political, financial and economic departments of the Secretariat. The Geneva office, on the other hand, acts as the focal point for emergency operational support and relief coordination, as well as for disaster mitigation.

The role of the department, however, clearly goes beyond mere coordination. Responding to humanitarian emergencies involves not only provision of purely emergency assistance but also the integration of immediate humanitarian action with longer term efforts to tackle the underlying causes of the crisis.

Also, emergency relief should not be seen as an issue in isolation. It needs to be provided in ways which support recovery and long-term development. It is of greatest importance to build better bridges between relief and development in the future. Therefore, a major objective is to ensure that relief is delivered in a way that does not undermine future development efforts.

Furthermore, particularly in situations where for political reasons, relief operations on the ground are either restricted or impossible, the exercise of humanitarian diplomacy can be effective in achieving necessary humanitarian objectives. The question often is not merely the delivery of the necessary food, medical or other relief supplies, of organization and logistics, but rather one of securing the safe delivery of relief supplies and the protection of relief personnel. Thus, negotiations to obtain access to the affected populations have become a central feature of humanitarian diplomacy.

In order to ensure that all aspects of humanitarian assistance are addressed comprehensively and well coordinated, DHA works closely with all concerned organizations of the United Nations system as well as with NGOs, and relies on their operational capacity to deliver the necessary assistance to those who need it. The Geneva office (DHA-UNDRO) continues to handle the UN system's response to all natural disasters, such as the recent earthquakes in Turkey and in Egypt. It also monitors the follow-up and prepares situation reports with all the partners, in particular programs for which consolidated appeals are issued.

The Department of Humanitarian Affairs takes full advantage of the skills and experience of NGOs, which are valued and encouraged as operational partners in collective efforts of the United Nations in the humanitarian field.

Since its establishment on 1 April 1992, DHA has coordinated the response of the UN and its related agencies to a large number of complex and natural emergencies in their joint efforts to assist the victims. A case in point is the drought emergency in southern Africa, for which DHA organized a consolidated appeal for the whole UN system in June 1992. The consolidated appeal process has been utilized effectively also for special emergency programs in Kenya, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and the former Yugoslavia.

**Qazi Shaukat Fareed,**
*Director, DHA New York*

# New strategies for refugees in the 1990s

The High Commissioner has described the New World Order as one fraught with both promise and peril for the world's refugees. Ironically, the Cold War was also a time of promise and peril. What has changed is the nature of the promises and perils, and now is the critical time to develop strategies to address the new reality.

The Cold War was characterized by a stultifying and dangerous simplicity. For refugees, the promise of it was that, in a sense, protection and solutions were often relatively easy to obtain. Because they fled from ostracized regimes, refugees benefited from *non-refoulement*, usually found asylum, were assisted by the donor governments, and were granted local integration or resettlement, as voluntary repatriation was considered impossible. The result was the development of and general adherence to a regime of protection for those who crossed borders.

However, exile was endless, and long-term dependency on international assistance all too prevalent. Most tragically, essential issues in countries of origin — economic development, respect for human rights and minorities, and the needs of the internally displaced — were never addressed. Furthermore, in many countries, whole generations were armed and taught warfare as a way of life. This was the breeding ground for the disasters we are now inheriting.

In the New World Order, there are, as yet, no certainties and certainly no stagnation. In the initial period of this whirl of change, the promise is that there is renewed interest in peace and democracy, and an international community with the apparent resolve to promote these through united action. A rejuvenated United Nations is trying to build a more streamlined and coordinated response and is ploughing new ground in international peacemaking and peacekeeping. In the last three years, the UN has launched more peacekeeping operations than in its previous 43 years. Furthermore, there is greater recognition of the relationship between internal affairs and international security, with a consequent greater emphasis on states' responsibilities to their own nationals.

But the peril is that many states which should be reaping the benefits of peace are instead experiencing the escalation of conflict and ethnic and religious strife within their borders. Rather than being able to turn to the needs of their people, these states are being torn apart, preventing any possibility of human rights and development, not to mention effective humanitarian action. One immediate consequence has been an increase in the already vast numbers of internally displaced persons.

In addition to this overt violence, the intractable problems of repression and poverty continue to fuel increasingly complex mass movements of people. People are on the move for such a mix of reasons that refugee definitions are less and less capable of capturing their experience, which is likely to involve a complicated mix of compulsion and choice. Out of both valid and invalid concerns for the security issues raised by these mass movements, receiving states respond with tighter asylum and immigration policies. They also respond with fear, racism and xenophobia. The international regime of refugee protection, carefully built up over decades, shows signs of unraveling.

It is these aspects of the New World Order — internal strife, disintegration of states, internal displacement, and rising national security concerns — that have led to the increased focus on political and humanitarian action within countries of origin. But it is an uneasy transition period. It is characterized by ambivalent re-evaluation of traditional notions of state sovereignty on the one hand, and numerous vac-

*Editor's note:*
*The following article is based on a speech by Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees M. Douglas Stafford in Minneapolis, USA, on 24 Sept. 1992.*

uums of state power on the other. Both have profound consequences for humanitarian action for the displaced.

As the UN and its member states move into these uncharted waters, not only are there complex philosophical and political questions to be answered, but there are also practical, operational ones as well. Though the UN is more aggressively pursuing the resolution of conflict and humanitarian crises, it has yet to retool itself into the operational animal it needs to be to do the host of things being asked of it. Nor has the international community come to terms with essential issues. For example, during the paralysis of the Cold War, the UN was able to do important work in setting standards in the area of human rights. It has not, however, been able to develop means to enforce compliance

In this dramatic new stage, we must look again at the ever present challenges:

-How to assist uprooted people, particularly in the context of conflict and grinding poverty.

-How to protect uprooted people by maintaining respect for basic human rights, *non-refoulement* and asylum.

-How to enable the displaced to return home in safety and dignity and rebuild their lives.

-How to prevent and solve refugee problems.

Some of the areas in which the UN and UNHCR are trying to seize the opportunities presented by the New World Order so as to meet these challenges more effectively can be loosely grouped as follows:

-emphasis on comprehensive responses;

-new directions in protection;

-new modalities for humanitarian action.

With regard to comprehensive responses, the end of the Cold War allows us, finally, to embrace the obvious — that is, that solutions must confront all aspects of the problem. For the displaced, this means solutions must include peace, human rights and development. The UN and UNHCR

For human rights and protection, the first thing to note is that the Cold War and the predominance of state sovereignty left us with a very unbalanced system of protection for displaced persons.

have taken a number of steps towards building a comprehensive response in the direction of these elements, but much more needs to be done.

Concerning peace efforts, a closer link between political action and humanitarian action must be forged. UNHCR considers this crucial, as we often confront, on the ground, the rather anomalous situation where humanitarian efforts drive political efforts for conflict resolution, rather than vice versa. If this dynamic results in peace, it is of course acceptable. It is unacceptable, however, when humanitarian action becomes a substitute for political action. The creation of the post of the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs should result in greater coordination between the humanitarian and political cones of the UN. But it is essential that with the end of the Cold War both states and the UN push much more aggressively for earlier resolution of the political crises that displace people.

Within the UN, there are presently much greater efforts to coordinate the expertise and resources of the various agencies for a truly comprehensive response to a humanitarian crisis. At present, compelling test cases for such coordination are the humanitarian endeavors in Somalia and in former Yugoslavia. In both places, joint agency missions, with government participation, have assessed the needs, have issued consolidated appeals, and are now implementing assistance programs. There is and should be a great deal of scrutiny of these joint efforts, so as to push the system into the most efficient use of its resources.

## CROSS-MANDATE

Another model of a comprehensive response is the cross-mandate approach being employed in Ethiopia. With the cross-mandate approach, we have abandoned traditional refugee assistance based on individual registration of refugees and individual refugee entitlement. We have done so, because we have found that, particularly in areas of instability and underdevelopment, traditional assistance not only creates dependency among refugees and deters durable solutions for them, it also complicates assistance to the host community which is equally in need.

Under the cross-mandate approach, the needs of the entire community are assessed, including the needs of refugees, internally displaced, drought victims, demobilized soldiers and returnees. International and non-governmental agencies cross the boundaries of their traditional mandates to assist all these groups. The goal is to stabilize the entire population of a community, and end the vicious cycle in which persons are refugees one day, returnees the next, internally displaced the next, and refugees again a week later.

Another key concern of UNHCR which calls for a more comprehensive response has been what we call "the development gap." The development gap is faced by millions of people who are returning home to what could be called disaster areas. These are communities devastated by years of war and burdened with large numbers of internally displaced and demobilized soldiers. They have little or no infrastructure, little or no functioning economy or job opportunities. They are littered with mines and filled with readily available sophisticated weapons. The development gap threatens the whole notion of "repatriation in safety and dignity."

In order for people to be able to return to such communities, remain there and rebuild viable lives, they must have what we call "emergency development." This is fast-acting development that provides basic health care, basic education, basic employment and economic opportunity. Working with UNDP and NGOs, UNHCR is implementing quick impact projects, or QIPS, to address these needs. These cost an average of $30,000 and involve such things as the training of midwives, repair of a local bridge giving access to markets, provision of a rice-thrasher which doubles the price farmers can get for their rice, provision of a used school bus which marks the beginning of public transport. These are small efforts, but their essential value is enormous. So far they are the only bridge between humanitarian relief and longer-term development. Development agencies and lending institutions must shift from their traditional focus on large infrastructure projects to such efforts.

For human rights and protection, the first thing to note is that the Cold War and the predominance of state sovereignty left us with a very unbalanced system of protection for dis-

placed persons. Ironically, the level of protection is highest for people who have left their countries. It begins to fall upon their return home. Further, for those fleeing conflict, the level of protection is highest for victims of international armed conflict. It is lower for victims of non-international armed conflict, and virtually nonexistent for victims of internal disturbances and gross violations of human rights. Thus, though there is greater interest in humanitarian action in countries of origin, there is very little legal or political basis for such action.

Nevertheless, UNHCR is attempting to focus its efforts in that direction and has indeed been asked by the Secretary-General to do so in such places as Sri Lanka, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia. Recently an internal working group on international protection underlined that displacement, coupled with the need for protection, must be the starting point for any consideration of the competence of UNHCR for a particular group. While such competence is certain for persons who have crossed borders, it may also be appropriate for those displaced within their own country for refugee-like reasons. As I have indicated, this would clearly be the case where such persons are inextricably mixed with returnees so that assistance to returnees alone would be both inhumane and impracticable. Such measures might also serve to ameliorate conditions so as to prevent further displacement.

This raises the concept of preventive protection. Preventive protection is activity undertaken to attenuate the causes of displacement, so that choosing to remain home is a humane and viable option. It is not activity undertaken to prevent refugee flows. The right to seek and enjoy asylum is a fundamental human right and must be upheld. Though UNHCR intends to develop the concept of preventive protection, it does not intend to do so at the expense of the principles of *non-refoulement* and asylum. It is our foremost challenge to promote and maintain basic protection principles, particularly when restrictionism and xenophobia are on the rise.

Preventive protection can take both indirect and direct forms. Indirect preventive protection involves such activities as early-warning, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, human rights promotion, and economic and social development. These are crucial areas for inter-agency and governmental cooperation.

Direct prevention consists of such activities as the establishment of open relief centers, the delivery of assistance to the internally displaced or victims of conflict, and the monitoring of human rights and physical safety with appropriate follow-up action. Such activities in countries of origin are difficult to carry out and problematic in other ways. Not only do they directly confront issues of state sovereignty; but perceptions of them by receiving states may affect the admission of refugees and the grant of asylum. For these reasons, UNHCR's involvement in preventive protection is based on the following conditions:

-the option of asylum remains open;

-HCR is given full access, security and other conditions so that it can operate;

-HCR's particular expertise is needed and sufficient funding is available;

-HCR's involvement is based on the consent of the parties and the approval of the international community;

-HCR's involvement is solutions-oriented, neutral, non-political and humanitarian in character.

## STRENGTHEN LAW

These are conditions which are not easy to maintain, and it is essential that international law and international mechanisms be strengthened for the assistance and protection of persons still within their own boundaries.

Finally, let us turn to modalities for humanitarian action. In trying to protect and assist the displaced, we are faced with two scenarios — states where national sovereignty is still invoked to prevent humanitarian action, and states where there is almost a complete vacuum of national authority — where, in fact, local warlords or militias have become our interlocutors.

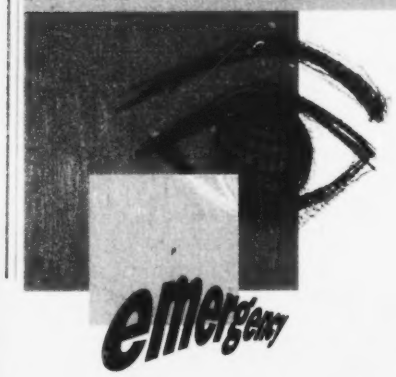
In December 1991, in Resolution 46/182 on humanitarian assistance, the General Assembly reaffirmed respect for sovereignty and territory and spoke of humanitarian assistance being provided "with the consent of the affected country". In the past the focus has been on the request of the affected country. Thus, though we have not reached an endorsement of intervention, we may have moved to a situation where acquiescence is sufficient.

But in both practical and political terms, UNHCR has found that protection and assistance cannot be conducted without the consent of the government and/or local authorities. Meaningful humanitarian access must be gained and maintained by continual and often painstaking negotiations with all the relevant parties, based on at least a minimum of mutual trust. Furthermore, and particularly in conflict situations, this trust often rests on the ability of UNHCR to preserve, in fact and in perception, the neutrality and humanitarian nature of our work...

I have described some of the directions in which we are moving in an effort to provide protection, assistance and solutions more effectively. But these are only small beginnings. With the opportunities presented, new energy should be given to addressing human misery comprehensively, so that efforts at peace, human rights and development form part of any international endeavour. New energy should be given to going to the source of the misery, so as to mitigate the disastrous conditions under which people are forced to uproot themselves. New energy should be given to breaking the constraints that have hindered us for so long in gaining access to those in need and finding solutions for them.

It is my fervent hope that this can be done before our windows of opportunity close - before we find ourselves in a New World Order which is not so new in its perpetuation of human misery.

**M. Douglas Stafford**
*Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees*




# A call for humanitarian intervention

In former Yugoslavia, cities remain under siege and are being shelled. People are being massacred, forced into exile, or "ethnically cleansed." United Nations experts warn that 100,000 people may die of hunger and cold this winter in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Only three years ago, who would have imagined that such a cruel war would break out on Europe's doorstep? How can we accept it today?

France was the first country to call for international intervention. While the international response has been "caution and conferences," France was able, painstakingly, to push for some very limited action. We've set up an array of humanitarian mechanisms. Thousands of French soldiers are among the Blue Berets; humanitarian corridors must be reopened constantly; Sarajevo airport must be kept in operation. We've backed the arms embargo, economic sanctions and the no-fly zone over Bosnia.

The UN Security Council has adopted Resolution 771, which calls for holding personally responsible those political leaders found guilty of massacres. Another resolution, 780, calls for the setting up of a war crimes investigation commission.

We've visited detention camps and forced the opening of some of them. Others have been closed under our pressure. Long live the memory of those journalists who sacrificed their lives while trying to expose the truth. There must be more we can do.

We must not allow humanitarian action to be an excuse for political cowardice.

There should be some kind of preventive diplomacy. We all know the war may spill over to Kosovo, possibly triggering the involvement of Albania, of Macedonia and, subsequently, of Greece. We must be on the ground before the fighting breaks out. It's so much easier to prevent a conflict than to wait for a country to go up in flames before taking any action.

This war must be stopped. The children of Sarajevo must be saved. Each day that goes by renders our unavoidable intervention more costly and less effective.

In Africa, meanwhile, entire populations in Somalia and Liberia are being extinguished, victims of a famine which is the direct result of clan warfare. There also, we would need thousands of Blue Berets to separate the combatants and allow relief supplies to reach the civilian population and the dying children. Let's not arrive too late. Already, many are too weak to swallow the food we bring them.

Humanitarian intervention, backed by UN resolutions, has become our duty. And little by little, under the impetus of war, catastrophe and the awakening of the world's conscience, this duty should become our right: to intervene wherever victims are calling out for help, where human beings are suffering and dying, regardless of borders.

This concept rests on very simple principles which should be applied everywhere, despite the presence of dictatorships, barbed wire and closed borders. We must:

-Deal with problems and human beings one at a time, going beyond politics and preconceived ideas. We should not wait for the creation of a system designed to save *all* lives before doing whatever is necessary to save *one* life.

-Go beyond Manicheism. Human misery is neither left nor right of the

political spectrum. Corpses are neither good nor bad. All mass graves have the same stench. All bombarded hospitals need doctors, nurses and medicines.

-Go beyond lip service. Never hesitate to go to the field, where human beings need other human beings.

-Expose abuses. The media are pivotal in shaking the world's conscience. Indifference and secrecy are what dictatorships thrive on. Killing with impunity behind protective borders should not be tolerated.

-Prevent conflicts rather than arrive too late on the scene.

In this harsh world, we should add another principle: when governments, armed bands and militias hamper humanitarian action and fail to understand anything but the show of force, then force must be used to protect humanitarian action. That happened in Iraq. When Saddam Hussein, after having lost the war, tried to wipe the Kurds off the face of the earth, the international community intervened under the protection of the allied armies. It is slowly happening in former Yugoslavia, where Blue Berets, armed with light weapons, and recently with heavier ones, are escorting aid convoys.

Shall we continue forever to try to make wars more humane and famine less painful? No. One day, with the help of an international force in the service of the United Nations, we shall have to learn to prevent them. It is the moral imperative of emergencies, the policy of the future.

**Bernard Kouchner**

*French Minister for Health and Humanitarian Action*

# Lessons learned and Gulf

# from Sudan emergencies

The stench invaded the nostrils. The slime and grunge underfoot tested even the strongest of stomachs. Cholera was imminent. The Kurds were burying 50 or more of their elderly and infants a day beneath the putrid slush and snow. Diarrhoea was rampant.

"Give us at least a shovel," people cried as they used whatever crude implements they could find to scrape away the excrement and entrails of slaughtered animals littering that miserable mountainside in southeastern Turkey. Once buried, perhaps the waste wouldn't be so apt to pollute water sources.

The daily coordination committee meeting between NGOs, UN personnel, local agencies and allied military officers knew their No. 1 priority had to be sanitation.

The daily coordination committee meeting between NGOs, UN personnel, local agencies and allied military officers knew their No. 1 priority had to be sanitation. At least 30,000 shovels and other digging tools were required for the 150,000 refugees who had hurriedly fled to the remote mountain valley — an area that in the best of times might be home to a couple of hundred goats.

Priorities are priorities. Make decisions. Don't vacillate. So when the allied military, a major NGO and the United Nations simultaneously offered to procure the tools, the committee didn't hesitate to order them from all three.

And soon, the 30,000 tools began arriving. Rushed off the helicopters, even ahead of food and blankets, bundle after bundle of white wooden handles began piling up in the sunshine along the landing zone. Hearts lifted. It took a day or two, as chopper after chopper disgorged the bundles of wooden manna, before anyone

***Kurdish asylum-seekers at Camp Isikveren in March 1991.***
PHOTO: P. ARTINIAN / EDITING

realized that none of the handles had any heads — no shovels, no picks, only shiny wooden handles. Thousands and thousands of handles.

Fortunately, cholera did not arrive either. The tens of thousands of refugees quickly vanished back over the mountains to the "safe haven" of northern Iraq as fast as they had arrived, leaving behind a horribly disfigured moonscape of tree stumps, debris and graves.

The mounds of gleaming wooden handles also remained — a sad lesson in basic emergency management.

Emergencies still come and go. And refugees still die. But with every emergency, UNHCR and its partners have learned some very valuable — and often difficult — lessons.

UNHCR has completed evaluations of emergency operations in the Sudan (1985) and Iraq (1991). While giving recognition where due, these evaluations also highlighted a multitude of sins in both emergencies, some of them strikingly similar despite the half-decade interlude between the two crises.

As underscored by both studies, refugee emergency management is simply that, management. There is one key difference, however. We are dealing with human lives, not lost factory production. We should beware of smart-sounding management jargon and facile recipes for solving life and death problems.

The most deadly killer in any humanitarian emergency is not dehydration, measles, malnutrition or the weather, it is bad management. This includes a lack of support, guidance and preparedness, poor coordination, low motivation, bad communications and unclear policy guidelines.

In the Sudan and Iraq evaluations, the authors emphasized the need for preparedness. This included standby agreements with governments and NGOs; the stockpiling of materials and equipment; the preparation of programing and management tools; faster WFP/UNHCR food aid capacities; a logistics unit at headquarters; and improved early warning and staff training.

> At headquarters and in field offices, emergency focal points must be given the flexibility to make urgent decisions.

Repeatedly, the studies make note of the absence of early planning in the initial stages of emergency operations. They also note the need for clear lines of authority and for the systematic delegation of that authority, especially to field managers. (This problem was, however, refreshingly less evident in the Kurdish refugee crisis). The evaluations called for a clear definition of responsibility; for the setting of clear priorities; for special emergency funding and procurement procedures; for the rapid deployment of trained and experienced staff; and for the establishment of adequate living and working conditions in the field.

Perhaps no single failure brings greater catastrophe in its wake than inadequate coordination. Disorganization compounds the natural confusion of an emergency. Like a great ship adrift, agencies end up acting in discord. Sometimes, the lead agency role is either unclear or ignored. At headquarters and in field offices, emergency focal points must be given the flexibility to make urgent decisions. A senior, field-based coordinator should be appointed as early in the operation as possible.

Both documents emphasized the importance of having one person ultimately responsible for any given action. And these managers ought to be made accountable through regular evaluation of the operation, as it progresses.

In both the Sudan and Iraq emergencies, staffing preparedness and deployment were inadequate. Operations are people. The right person in the right place, properly trained and motivated through professional and personal support and recognition, is crucial. Priority deployment to the field during an emergency is an obvious, but in practice routinely opposed, recommendation. Forward staff planning, activated through non-bureaucratic emergency procedures is an equally evident requirement.

Many of the above recommendations are being followed, and donors are supporting the initiatives. But much more needs to be done.

UNHCR bears a responsibility far beyond that of many a government: the protection — often the very survival — of more than 18 million refugees.

Hence, while responsibility for political solutions to emergencies must rest with governments — and this they should not abdicate — implementation of the collective will still falls to the "specialists," including UNHCR.

When both political and material means have been assured by governments in dealing with humanitarian emergencies, UNHCR must respond. And we must be held accountable for the well-being of the most vulnerable, never more so than in emergencies.

**JOHN TELFORD**
*Emergency Preparedness and Response Section*

***Workers and soldiers offload food from UNHCR airlift plane at Sarajevo airport.***
PHOTO: UNHCR / E. DAGNINO

# The role of the military in humanitarian emergencies

The emergence of the New World Order has found relief workers and the military treading on very unfamiliar ground as they work hand-in-hand in humanitarian emergencies.

With East-West tensions easing, brutal ethnic wars have erupted in many regions of Africa, Southwest Asia and in the former Yugoslavia. The fighting has imperilled the delivery of food and medicine, trapped large numbers of innocent civilians and compromised the safety of relief workers. In many cases, governments have subjected their own peoples to human rights abuses and frustrated efforts by the international community to reach the victims.

Increasingly, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is being called upon to ease the hunger and misery of the displaced in the midst of conflict and chaos.

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata outlined the challenge facing her office in remarks to the 43rd annual

meeting of UNHCR's Executive Committee recently. "Our effectiveness in emergencies is being determined, not only by our readiness and capacity to act, but also by the prevailing security situation," she said. For the first time since it was founded more than four decades ago, UNHCR has turned to the international community for large-scale military assistance in its operations, particularly in the former Yugoslavia. Many governments have responded, contributing military planes, personnel and expertise to the UNHCR airlift to the besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. Army logistics personnel and equipment are also helping UNHCR ferry supplies overland to people caught in the worst humanitarian crisis in Europe since World War II.

In September, the Security Council expanded the peacekeeping force in Bosnia by placing an additional 6,000 troops at UNHCR disposal to ensure the delivery of relief aid. The troops were authorized to use force in self-defense and in situations in which armed persons prevent them from carrying out their missions.

Mrs. Ogata said the increasing cooperation "has given a new dimension to humanitarian operations as well as to the role of the military in the post-Cold War era. When peace and compassion replace war and destruction, when the enormous logistical capability of the military is channeled into non-political purposes ... I believe we all stand to gain."

### DRAMATIC SHIFT

Military resources have long been used to ease the suffering of victims of major earthquakes, cyclones and other natural calamities in non-conflict zones. But in 1991, a dramatic shift in harnessing the expertise of the military for use in mercy missions emerged. People in northern Iraq had fled into Turkey after the Gulf War. U.S.-led forces which had just fought Iraq were there first to help the refugees. By providing a sanctuary within Iraq, the military was able to help asylum-seekers return home in record time, forestalling what otherwise would have been a long confinement in Turkey.

The swift military response in northern Iraq sparked a debate on the use of armies in humanitarian emergencies. There are fears, for example, that relief agencies could lose their non-partisan humanitarian character if they are seen working with uniformed troops; and that such an undertaking could be interpreted by a host country as a violation of its sovereignty.

In a recent speech, Deputy High Commissioner M. Douglas Stafford said the preservation of UNHCR's humanitarian mandate "is not only a fundamental responsibility, it is a practical necessity, lest we too become parties to the conflict and potential targets.

***Ferrying food supplies at the Iraq-Turkey border in 1991: increasing joint missions by troops and relief workers.***
PHOTO: UNHCR / A. HOLLMANN

UN forces can serve both explicitly and implicitly as a stabilizing international presence, assisting in the reduction of hostilities and human rights abuses.

"These issues become more critical with the use of military resources in humanitarian endeavors," Mr. Stafford said. "It is a fine line to maintain one's humanitarian, non-political character while engaged with the military. But under certain parameters, UNHCR has found that the use of military resources can be invaluable. One has been where states provide needed expertise and logistical support to back up the delivery of assistance. Another has been where forces under a unified UN command, such as UNPROFOR in former Yugoslavia, provide security and support for our humanitarian convoys."

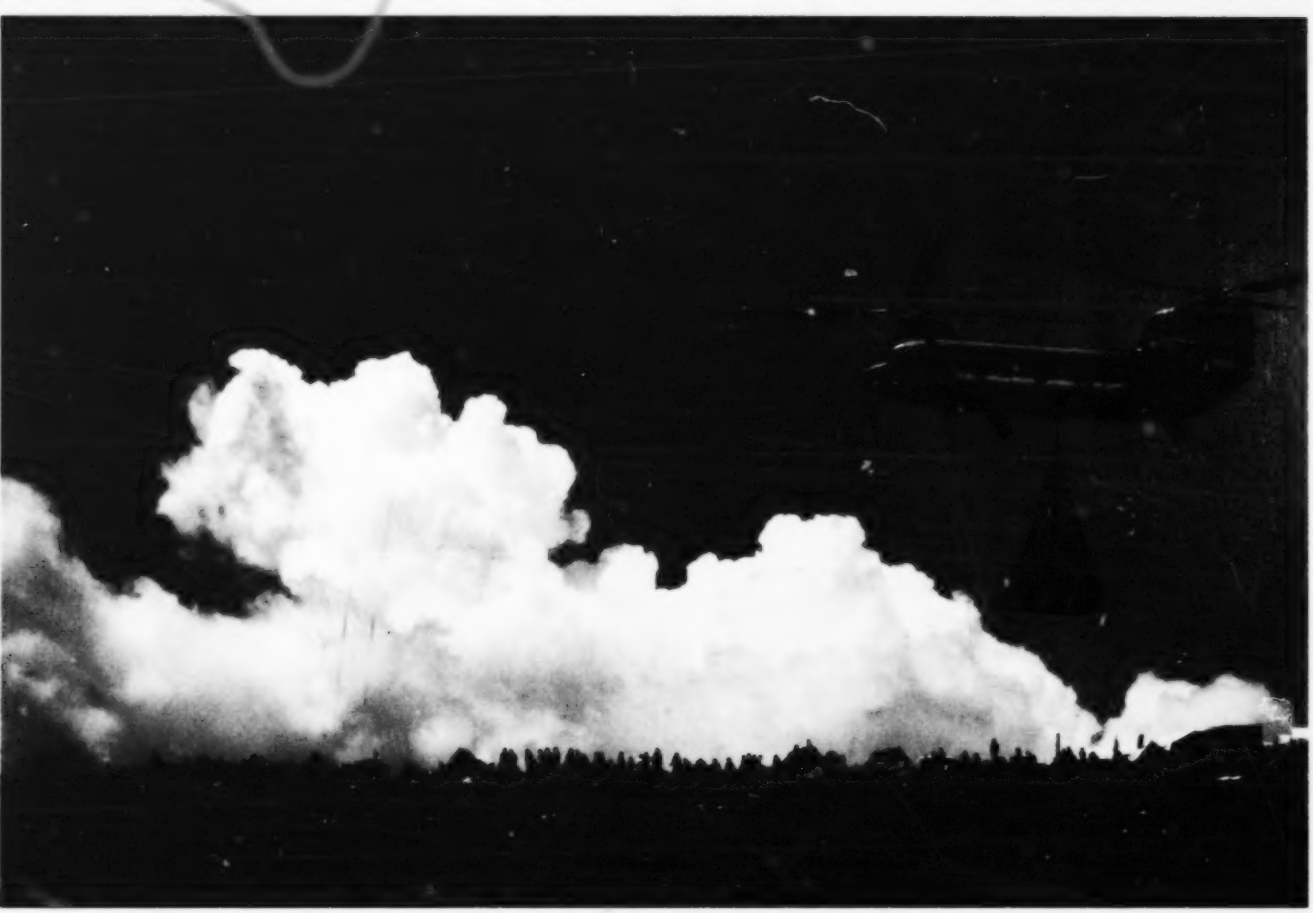
In addition, he noted, UN forces can serve both explicitly and implicitly as a stabilizing international presence, assisting in the reduction of hostilities and human rights abuses.

"For these reasons," he said, "UNHCR has welcomed the increased development and deployment of UN peacekeeping forces, and encourages their involvement not only in conflict management, but also in conflict resolution, where necessary."

Some aid officials worry that employing the military machinery of donor governments could prove too costly and reduce development funds needed after the emergency. But despite such reservations, relief agencies and non-governmental organizations have acknowledged the immense logistical benefits from the military's involvement in their operations.

In fact, as the threat of a global nuclear war between the superpowers recedes, major powers themselves are taking a hard look at how their armies would fit into the changed political climate. The United Nations, increasingly called upon to unravel complex situations around the world, is enlisting more countries to provide troops in peacekeeping and peacemaking tasks and in ensuring the delivery of relief aid. In the last three years, the United Nations has launched more peacekeeping operations than in its previous 43 years.

UNHCR, designated as the lead agency in coordinating aid for the former Yugoslavia, turned to donor



governments to airlift supplies to Sarajevo last summer. The Bosnian capital was encircled and fighting prevented land convoys from delivering sufficient food and medicine to the 450,000 people living in and around the city. The main lifeline to the city was through an airlift.

"It was a new ball game. There's no way we could do it alone," said UNHCR senior emergency officer John Telford. "It was an exceptional situation that required an exceptional solution."

The United States, Britain, France and Germany immediately dispatched air force officers to UNHCR headquarters in Geneva to direct the project through a new Air Operations Cell. As many as 19 governments sent military transports for the operation, which allowed UNHCR to meet its goals in Sarajevo.

Over a two-month period beginning on July 3, transport planes from these 19 nations flew 1,025 sorties and ferried some 12,400 tons of life-saving supplies into Sarajevo. But on Sept. 3, an Italian G-222 cargo aircraft was shot down by a missile as it approached Sarajevo. Four crewmen aboard the plane died in the tragic incident, which prompted a month-long suspension of the airlift and set back preparations for UNHCR's important winter program.

On the ground, a British Army officer assigned to UNHCR demonstrated the military's laudable determination to accomplish a mission under difficult circumstances. As an observer in a convoy-planning team, Lt. Col. Neill Wright joined a UNHCR relief mission to deliver supplies to trapped residents in the Bihac region of northern Bosnia in late August. Outside the town of Karlovac, on a highway designated as a "humanitarian corridor," local policemen stopped the convoy and said they wanted to search the trucks "for weapons." The search went on for five tense hours, but the policemen found nothing.

The international drivers, justifiably angry at the delay and afraid that the harassment would be repeated, decided to turn back in protest. But the 39-year-old Wright persuaded them to proceed to their destination at Velika Kladusa. "At that point, it was more important to achieve our goal than to go back and make a political statement," Wright said later. He said he was not concerned about his life, but was worried the situation would get out of hand while there were no U.N. troops around. U.N. peacekeepers patrol the area.

Military officials see increasing joint initiatives between troops and relief workers in situations that require an extraordinary amount of logistics capability such as that needed in ex-Yugoslavia. But such a role also demands that troops remain in a high state of readiness.

"While we are prepared to die and are trained to use force, the idea of never having to use that force is certainly an attractive one from a personal perspective," said Lt. Col. Gil Williams, a U.S. Air Force officer attached to the UNHCR Airlift Operations Cell in Geneva. "The requirement to continue being prepared with adequate force is also necessary. That power gives us the deterrence that allows us to be passive."

**Fernando del Mundo**

emergency

# Flexibility crucial in ex-Yugoslavia emergency

If ever an emergency tested the resolve and resources of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, it is the humanitarian crisis in ex-Yugoslavia.

Since the beginning of the bloody conflict in early 1991, UNHCR and its partners have faced nearly every kind of obstacle imaginable in trying to deliver aid to hundreds of thousands of people caught up in Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II.

The dangers are many, as tragically underscored by the deaths of four Italian Air Force crew whose G-222 cargo plane was shot down by a missile on Sept. 3 while taking part in the UNHCR-UNPROFOR humanitarian airlift to the besieged city of Sarajevo. It was not the first time planes from some of the 19 nations taking part in the airlift were targets. The resumption of the airlift on Oct. 3 was testimony to the resolve of the international community and to the bravery of the air crews and other personnel whose mission is to save innocent lives in the midst of a brutal war.

Indeed, one of the ugly hallmarks of the conflict in ex-Yugoslavia is the continuing refusal by all sides to honor commitments on the safe passage of humanitarian convoys. UN personnel in Sarajevo and elsewhere — already living and working under extremely difficult conditions — are regularly targets of one faction or another. Several clearly marked aid convoys have been fired on, drivers have been beaten and harassed by drunken militiamen, entire convoys have been hijacked, and others refused passage through checkpoints.

UNHCR workers who have brought alleged human rights abuses to public attention have been harassed and intimidated.

"We are faced all the time by negative, provocative attitudes," said UNHCR Special Envoy to ex-Yugoslavia, Jose-Maria Mendiluce. "If this cannot work, any means should be used to guarantee that the victims will be safe."

To help ensure that relief supplies get through to the innocent victims of the conflict, the UN Security Council on September 14 authorized the deployment of some 6,000 additional UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) troops to the region. Mendiluce said UNHCR was hopeful that the expanded UNPROFOR presence "will be one way to resolve the needs of massive displacement."

The emergency in ex-Yugoslavia is one of the biggest in UNHCR history, Mendiluce said. "What makes it different are the enormously complex security and logistics needs," he said. "The numbers of people to be assisted — some 3 million — are enormous, and many of them are spread out across remote areas that are very difficult to reach... The war has destroyed many homes. All this destruction has created

***UNHCR trucks in Split prepare to leave for Sarajevo.***
PHOTO: UNHCR / V. ROJE

an enormous burden for us."

Zagreb-based operations chief Tony Land notes that UNHCR and its partners must deal with a constantly shifting front line that snakes 1,000 kilometers across Bosnia-Herzegovina, passing through at least one-fifth of the republic's municipalities.

"We simply don't have the expertise to run a country of 4.5 million people if it insists on systematically trying to destroy itself," Land said. "We can put plastic sheeting on broken windows to keep out the cold, but entire homes are being destroyed faster than we can repair them or get assistance through."

But if that assistance — food, shelter and medicine — does not get through, Mendiluce and others fear hundreds of thousands of people could perish this winter in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Altogether, UNHCR must provide an estimated 12,800 metric tons of food each week to people in ex-Yugoslavia, more than 9,000 metric tons of it to Bosnia-Herzegovina. By late November, however, only about half of that amount was getting through to Bosnia-Herzegovina because of continuing security problems and bad weather.

In a grim report issued in early October, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that the amount of food reaching Sarajevo had to be increased immediately to at least 240 metric tons daily. At that time, the Sarajevo airlift was just resuming after a month-long suspension, and less than 45 metric tons of supplies a day were making it into the besieged city by road.

"At this rate of food supply," WHO said in a press release, "children and adults will enter a state of profound semi-starvation with children dying within three to four weeks. Adult men and women will lose five to eight kilos per week and become severely deficient within eight weeks. Previous siege experience suggests an escalating mortality within two weeks of the clear signs of starvation."

The report also noted that winter temperatures can plunge to minus 20 degrees Celsius and many areas are cut off by snow drifts of up to three meters.

### INCREDIBLE DEMANDS

Mendiluce said UNHCR's main strength in facing the emergency has been its staff. "Working under difficult conditions, our staff have provided innovative responses to the incredible demands placed upon them," he said. "They are constantly forced to make on-the-spot decisions that win us credibility with all the parties involved."

Land agreed. "Our strength has been our ability to be very flexible and to be able to develop and change programs quickly in response to changing conditions," he said.

***Shop draws people during a lull in fighting in Sarajevo.***
PHOTO: UNHCR / E. DAGNINO

One example of that flexibility was the shifting at short notice of some 20 trucks from the coastal city of Split to Belgrade in late October when road routes into central Bosnia-Herzegovina from the west were cut off by fighting and bad weather. A new route from Belgrade to Sarajevo was quickly put into use.

"I'm very proud of our staff," Deputy High Commissioner M. Douglas Stafford said after a recent visit to ex-Yugoslavia. "We are getting better and better at dealing with emergencies, but this one is a totally different animal from the rest. It's a long-range emergency, so we've got to put as much decision-making capability as possible in the field, and trust in our managers."

But no matter how good those managers, the sheer size of the operation — UNHCR's component alone is more than $282 million just for the winter — presents a major obstacle. "Compared with the magnitude of needs, we always have very limited resources," Mendiluce said.

Working in a war zone presents many other problems that are new to UNHCR staffers, including how to handle reports of alleged human rights abuses. The world has been shocked by the abuses committed in ex-Yugoslavia, and new reports of atrocities surface almost daily in the media. Some critics contend the United Nations was slow to do anything about the abuses and reacted only when the media publicized them — as with the horrible conditions in detention camps. Today, UNHCR passes all such information on to the recently appointed UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights.

UNHCR has also had some difficulty convincing countries to share the burden, not just financially but by opening their doors for temporary refuge to those fleeing the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In late October, several notorious prison camps across Bosnia remained full because the international community had failed to respond to appeals seeking temporary refuge for thousands of detainees who could have been evacuated had places been found.

François Fouinat, Geneva-based coordinator for the operation in ex-Yugoslavia, said the international community must understand that humanitarian assistance cannot be a substitute for a lasting political settlement.

"We are convinced that there is no humanitarian solution to the problem," Fouinat said. "And we are very conscious that the humanitarian effort is already stretched to the limit. Anything can disrupt the lifeline, and we experience such disruptions just about every day.

"UNHCR and its partners are doing their best with limited resources, but this kind of operation brings the humanitarian world to its limits," he continued. "Definitely, there are situations which are beyond the capacity of humanitarian organizations, and in Bosnia-Herzegovina we may be close to reaching that point."

**Ron Redmond**

# That others may live...

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata needs only to glance up from her desk to be reminded of the four Italian Air Force men killed when their plane was shot down 3 Sept. while on a mission for the UN humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo.

Atop a table in Mrs. Ogata's office are the neatly arranged photos of the four men, a blanket from their cargo of relief supplies, and a piece of twisted wreckage bearing the clearly identifiable UNHCR logo.

"It serves as a reminder of the supreme sacrifice these men made for the people of Sarajevo and for all of us who are trying to help the innocent victims of this tragic war," Mrs. Ogata said.

"It also reminds me of the brave people who continue to put their lives on the line every day on behalf of the world's refugees, and of my responsibility to all of them. We have an operation in the middle of a war zone. Although we are regularly putting staff at great risk, we must go on since we are trying to protect and assist many, many more people who would be at greater risk if we were not there."

The 3 Sept. incident claimed the lives of:

- Lt. Col. Marco Betti, the 40-year-old chief pilot. Lt. Col. Betti was born in Pisa and had taken part in missions in Lebanon, Russia, the Persian Gulf, Turkey, Iraq and ex-Yugoslavia. He is survived by his wife and two children.

- Maj. Marco Rigliaco, the 26-year-old second pilot. An expert pilot, Maj. Rigliaco was born in Naples and had taken part in missions in the Persian Gulf, Somalia and ex-Yugoslavia.

- First Class Marshal Giuseppe Buttiglieri, the 39-year-old flight engineer. A native of Castrocielo, First Class Marshall Buttiglieri had taken part in missions in Lebanon, Somalia, the Persian Gulf, Turkey and ex-Yugoslavia. He is survived by his wife and two children.

- Marshal Giuliano Velardi, director of loading. Marshal Velardi, 42, was born in Rome and, like his comrades, had studied at the air academies of Latina and Lecce. He is survived by his wife and one child.

The four Italians and their G-222 cargo plane were from the 46th Air Brigade in Pisa. At the time of the incident, Italy had flown 149 sorties into Sarajevo as part of the 19-nation international airlift organized by UNHCR and the UN Protection Force. According to a preliminary Italian government report, the plane was struck by at least one missile about 17 miles from Sarajevo. Investigators believe the missile was either an SA9, an SA16, or an improved version of the Stinger. There was no indication of who may have fired the missile.

A state funeral was held for the four men on 7 Sept. in the Cathedral of Pisa. Among those attending the service were Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, president of the Republic of Italy; Giovanni Spadolini, president of the Senate; Silvano Labriola, chairman of the Defense Commission of the Chamber of Deputies; and Minister of Defense Salvo Ando. The High Commissioner was represented by Mr. Waldo Villalpando, the head of the UNHCR Rome office.

"We consider ourselves as one family," a pilot colleague of the dead men said after the service. "We know that from today on, we are poorer because a part of ourselves is no longer here."

***High Commissioner Sadako Ogata receives a piece of the Italian relief plane shot down in September.***

PHOTO UNHCR / A. HOLLMANN

# RADIO

# "Things are getting complicated..."

UNHCR's struggle to ease the massive human misery generated by the brutal war in ex-Yugoslavia sometimes seems almost futile. The numbers of dead, wounded and displaced, already huge, grow by the day as the fighting rages on with no end in sight.

But throughout the conflict, UNHCR's staff in the field have shown exceptional dedication, courage and flexibility, as illustrated by the following transcript of an Oct. 31 radio report and satellite telephone call from Anders Levinsen, of UNHCR's office in the Bosnia-Herzegovina town of Vitez. Levinsen and his staff were trying to cope with the arrival of thousands of desperate, displaced people who had just crossed the front lines near the city of Travnik after being forced three days earlier from their homes in the town of Jajce, which had fallen after a five-month siege. Here is Levinsen's report:

"Things are getting complicated on this end. People are still arriving in great numbers, and Travnik is like a can of sardines. People are getting tired and a little bit nervous of all the people in Travnik. Buses are arriving to take people out, but although everybody is doing what they can, they cannot keep up with the number of new arrivals. Hopefully, there will be no panic in Travnik...

"Some 8,000 to 10,000 people have so far arrived in Travnik from Jajce. We have been present the whole night, trying to arrange accommodation, tea and some breakfast for the new arrivals. There are no consistent reports from Jajce so far. Some people tell us that the whole town has fallen, some report only the old part has fallen. Some report heavy fighting, some report absolutely no fighting when they left the city. Some report that the whole city was burning, some report that only the old part of the city was burning.

"Only thing I know for sure is that thousands of people are arriving on foot, on horseback, in private vehicles, in buses, on trucks, on tractors, with their cattle, etc. I will estimate some 8,000 to 10,000. Civil Defense in Travnik estimates approximately 15,000 so far. They all report that we can expect between 20,000 to 40,000 within the next days...

"At approximately 22:30 hours, the first big group arrived exhausted, hungry and tired. Since then, people have arrived in one long queue...

"Field office Vitez brought all tea available in Vitez and Travnik last night and distributed it together with bread through the Civil Defense. At 2 a.m. we were out of tea and bread. At the moment, we have brought in additional soup and are distributing it to arrivals in Travnik.

"British UN Protection Force troops are setting up a small clinic/ambulance with assistance from Pharmacies Sans Frontières and Médecins du Monde. International Committee of the Red Cross will apparently supply the new arrivals... with blankets. UNHCR has arranged to pick up some 120 metric tons of food.

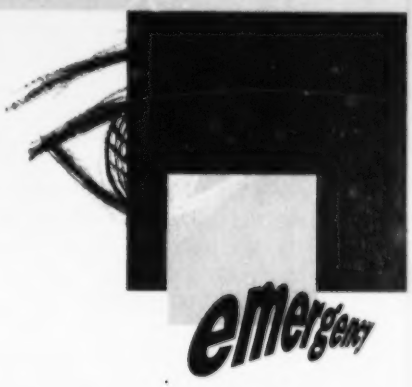
"Accommodation for some 18,000 new arrivals has been arranged with various mayors from surrounding towns... More capacity necessary due to the bad reports.

"All effort must be made at top political level to ensure safe movement of refugees. We will continue our soup and tea business. We will try to follow the situation closely and arrange delivery of blankets and food to new arrivals.

"That's all from this end now... Hopefully, I will soon be able to send an optimistic report..."

*(In a later telephone call, Levinsen reported the following.)*

"People are still arriving... We are trying to get them out of Travnik as there is no more room. Overcrowding is creating a very tense atmosphere. Thousands more people are expected to arrive tonight... The staff is still going, but very tired. I haven't slept since 6 a.m. yesterday morning. We are waiting to see what happens tonight. There is nothing more we can do... Civil Defense cited lack of fuel as an obstacle to people leaving Travnik. UNHCR went to a petrol station and gave them $3,500 to pay for fuel so people could leave..."




# Chaos, clans and lawlessness plague Kenya emergency

When you meet 50-year old Hassane Tohyare, a grizzled Somali herdsman who reluctantly fled his country in September to reach the safety of a refugee camp in Kenya, you glimpse the daily challenge confronting refugee workers as they struggle to cope with the massive refugee crisis unfolding in Kenya.

Tohyare, weakened by his trek to refuge, has just been handed a high-nutrition biscuit by camp workers alarmed by his malnourished condition. In a few minutes he will receive a tent, blankets, a sleeping mat, food rations and other supplies. At last he can rest, secure in the knowledge that he has finally found sanctuary from the deadly chaos of Somalia.

Busy relief workers might expect Tohyare to show some small sign of gratitude. But instead he pulls himself upright in the gray-white dust, summons his remaining energy, and unloads his first barrage of complaints as a refugee.

"I want to complain. This biscuit is okay, but I prefer milk," he begins. "I am regretting I came here. I have lost all my animals. I am now asking you for my benefits."

Tohyare says he demands restitution from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees because UNHCR workers inadvertently allowed "hyenas" to kill his three camels, 26 goats, three donkeys and two cows. "I am a refugee, and I want to complain," he repeats.

***Somali refugees wait for food aid at a border crossing point at Doble.***
PHOTO: UNHCR P. MOUMTZIS

More than 300,000 Somali refugees have fled to Kenya in the past two years, victims of the violence, anarchy and famine killing their country. They join about 60,000 Ethiopians and nearly 20,000 Sudanese who have swelled Kenya's total refugee population to 400,000, the fastest-growing number of refugees in the world outside former Yugoslavia.

The influx shows no sign of abating. Two-thirds of the Somali refugees in Kenya have arrived since January. New arrivals average about 500 per day.

And as relief workers have quickly

discovered, many Somali refugees are not bashful about expressing their complaints, demanding better protection, and, in some camps, clinging to the rigid clan system that has divided their country and has complicated the work of UNHCR and NGOs in the Kenya crisis.

Nowhere is Somali clanism more problematic for refugee workers than in the remote Kenyan border town of El Wak, where 15,000-20,000 Somalis have fled since May. Six clans and 21 subclans have emerged in the camp, each demanding control over their own food distributions.

"We must do everything through the clan leaders, who are difficult to deal with", says Kilian Kleinschmidt, a UNHCR worker in El Wak. Disorganized UNHCR food distributions, controlled by clan elders, deteriorate into near-riots and provoke hostility toward UNHCR workers, who are regularly accused of favoring some clans over others. Some refugees do not visit a child feeding center in the camp because Médecins Sans Frontières has inadvertently located it in the "neighborhood" of a rival clan, Kleinschmidt observes.

"Subclans have no end. It even goes into the family and which mother you have within the same family," says Zahra Jama, a UNICEF health worker in El Wak. Up the road in Mandera, where 50,000 Somali refugees have congregated, more than 92 subclans and sub-subclans have reportedly identified themselves.

Learning to negotiate through the byzantine maze of Somalia's infamous clan rivalries is but one of several challenges that define the refugee emergency in Kenya.

### SPECIAL CHALLENGES

Learning to negotiate through the byzantine maze of Somalia's infamous clan rivalries is but one of several challenges that define the refugee emergency in Kenya.

Somalia is, most observers now agree, one of the worst humanitarian disasters of all time. Refugees and their livestock are entering regions of Kenya that are already parched by drought, which complicates relief efforts and sharpens tensions between Kenyans and the refugees. A disproportionate number of refugees require expensive treatment for war wounds suffered in Somalia's unchecked violence.

In addition, eastern Kenya's reputation for banditry has worsened as arms from Somalia's civil war flood into the country, putting relief workers and refugees at risk. The belated swarm of journalists into the region has brought welcome international publicity, as well as burdensome demands for vehicles, interpreters, free flights to camps, and other strains on a fragile logistical network operated by UNHCR, UNICEF and NGOs.

Because of Kenya's drought, relief workers regularly divert refugee foodstocks to help feed local populations. "Gone are the days when we thought we could supply refugees with a basket of rations and ignore the local population," UNICEF's Carlton James explains.

The persistent lack of rain means that water sources such as rivers, lakes and underground acquifers are dangerously depleted throughout Kenya. Although many refugees in the region are semi-nomads accustomed to survival on a few liters of water per day, the country's huge population of refugees, plus their herds of camels, donkeys and goats are depleting the water supply to unprecedented low levels.

UNHCR officials are desperately attempting to relocate an entire camp of 30,000 Ethiopian refugees from Banissa, in northeast Kenya, as that camp's lone water source has dried to little more than a muddy puddle. In nearby Mandera, where 50,000 Somali refugees are encamped, UNHCR personnel warn that the local river "may dry soon."

"We are doing absolutely damaging things" to the water table and to the general environment, one UNHCR camp coordinator acknowledges, adding, "Don't even ask me about it, please."

UNHCR workers in some camps are considering a plan that would ease water demand and improve the refugees' diet by slaughtering animals purchased from the refugees' herds, and distributing the meat in food rations. The plan would also improve camp sanitation by reducing the number of animals dying of thirst. However, the monumental logistics of slaughtering the animals and distributing the meat equitably among the clans have so far delayed the plan.

### WOUNDS OF WAR

Another striking feature of Kenya's refugee emergency is the number of Somali refugees handicapped by wounds suffered in that country's ongoing civil war.

Relief workers and their strained budgets must provide treatment and therapy to individuals wounded from gunshots, mines, shrapnel, and other instruments of terror all too common in Somalia's random violence.

Severe cases require surgery at a provincial hospital in Garissa or in Nairobi. These hospitals receive an average of 200 refugee referrals per month and "90 percent of them are war wounds," according to UNHCR social service staff in Nairobi.

"The hospital in Nairobi is used to doing surgery on auto accident injuries, but now suddenly we must deal with surgery on war wounds, artificial limb implants, and other difficult procedures," says a Kenyan surgeon based in Nairobi. "The patients have no support group because they are refugees, so it all falls on UNHCR. Post-surgery care is also expensive and time consuming for our medical system."

Crutches, artificial limbs and wheel-

chairs are in short supply and could easily be donated by small humanitarian groups abroad, notes Jeannie Chamberlain, UNHCR's health coordinator at four camps in east-central Kenya.

### FEAR AND DANGER

Aside from the dire needs of the refugees themselves, the most pervasive feature of Kenya's refugee crisis — the topic never far from the minds of refugees and Western relief workers alike — is the new level of danger in rural areas of Kenya.

Lethal modern weapons smuggled across the border from Somalia have placed frightening firepower into the hands of Kenyan and Somali bandit gangs. The result is a brazen wave of killings, armed robberies and ambushes on the open road in rural areas. Occasional border incursions by Somalia's factional armies add to the danger.

"Every night when we go to sleep, we wonder if we will wake up alive," sighs the wife of one refugee.

In the most notorious cases, bandits ambushed and murdered five police in August. Days later, in the same region, 11 burned bodies were found near the refugee camp. UNHCR workers in the field confirm that at least five of the bodies were refugees and say an internal police investigation is underway.

Relief workers devote tremendous amounts of time to arranging heavily-armed police escorts for travel between camps since many police posts lack equipment. UNHCR often provides unmarked vehicles to local police and pays per diem for police protection.

"Lack of security," says UNHCR's Kleinschmidt, "really affects your work and everything you do."

Near most camps, residential compounds for NGO workers require armed guards. At one camp, El Wak, workers for the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières have survived several armed attacks on their homes. At Liboi camp, site of 40,000 refugees, UNHCR vehicles never contain more than 20 liters of gasoline in order to discourage bandits who might want to hijack the coveted vehicles into Somalia.

Kenyans living near refugee camps tend to blame refugees for the unprecedented crime and insecurity. They claim refugees hide their guns in the bush and are "refugees by day and armed bandits by night." Many refugees finger Kenyan gangs and Kenya's police as the culprits.

Indications are that all these accusations contain some truth, and that additional police can only improve security if they receive improved training, discipline and equipment.

### LEARNING LESSONS

Hassane Tohyare, the crusty Somali refugee full of complaints, is not alone in his criticism of UNHCR's performance during the Kenya refugee crisis. UNHCR personnel in the field, as well as other observers, score the organization for a number of lapses.

UNHCR has been slow to devote adequate staff and other resources to the emergency as refugee totals mount. Even at better-organized sites such as Ifo, where 115,000 refugees live in three camps, one-third of UNHCR's professional staff positions were vacant in September.

At El Wak and Mandera, sites for a combined 70,000 refugees, UNHCR mounted only a token presence until October. The lack of personnel at El Wak made organized food distributions impossible and forced UNHCR into a dangerous and counter productive reliance on the refugees' divisive clan system.

UNHCR/Kenya has no protection officers based in the camps and only two protection officers in Nairobi, "the same level as two years ago," when Kenya had a mere 15,000 refugees, laments Carroll Faubert, head of UNHCR Kenya operations.

The system, Faubert charges, has not allowed the emergency filling of posts despite the emergency conditions in Kenya. "The hiring approach has been traditional," he complains.

And Faubert himself has drawn criticism from other relief agencies for UNHCR's policy of "light intervention" — a policy which refrained all summer from establishing official camps for up to 70,000 Somali refugees in northeast Kenya in hopes of discouraging new arrivals. As malnutrition rates climbed and death rates remained high in northeast Kenya, UNHCR's policy of "light intervention" finally began switching to "heavy intervention" in September.

UNHCR has dramatically improved conditions at several camps since May. The agency's field personnel in Kenya exhibit impressive professionalism despite their insufficient numbers. And UNHCR's ambitious "cross-mandate" strategy has assisted local Kenyans as well as refugees.

Yet the relentless refugee influx is continuing. UNHCR and Kenyan authorities must now come to grips with the fact that Kenya's rapidly escalating refugee crisis is a long-term emergency which will not soon disappear. Incredibly, the crisis could grow worse — there's the matter of several hundred thousand potential new refugees lurking across the border, in southern Sudan.

Refugee workers in Kenya are holding their breath.

UNHCR has been slow to devote adequate staff and other resources to the emergency as refugee totals mount.

**Jeff Drumtra**
*U.S. Committee for Refugees*

# Mozambique: the next Somalia?

Peace may finally be coming to Mozambique, but it could be too late to avert widespread hunger, disease and death. If food does not immediately reach the millions of people in need, Mozambique may well become the next Somalia.

Despite a peace agreement signed in Rome on 4 October 1992, thousands of Mozambican refugees continue to flock daily into neighboring Malawi and Zimbabwe. They are fleeing famine, war and the worst drought in southern Africa in a century. The drought has made the establishment of camps for the new arrivals almost impossible as rivers and wells dry up and water becomes ever more scarce.

The refugees, often trudging hundreds of kilometers through mine fields and treacherous terrain with nothing to eat but shrubs and leaves, arrive

exhausted at border points. Most of them are dressed in rags, covered only by maize bags and loincloths.

In Mukumbura, I met a man who had just crossed the border into Zimbabwe with his two children after a one-week trek. I asked him why he left his village. "My wife just died of hunger," he said. "I don't want to see any more of my children die."

The lack of water, overcrowded camps and declining hygiene have drastically increased the risk of epidemics among the refugees. Malnutrition, cholera, malaria, measles, diarrhoea and respiratory diseases are the major causes of death in the camps.

Upon arrival at reception centers, the refugees are screened and vaccinated against measles, cholera and malaria. Most of them have not been vaccinated for two decades. Despite the systematic vaccinations, cholera outbreaks are taking their toll, mainly among the new arrivals. In Lysungwi, 100 new cholera cases were arriving daily in mid-October. Thirty had died.

Most of the camps in Malawi and Zimbabwe are severely overcrowded, and UNHCR field officers are struggling to find more sites for the new arrivals. Zimbabwe's Chambuta camp, for example, received 20,000 refugees in less than six months. Some 200 refugees arrive daily in Zimbabwe. More than 500 newcomers arrive every day in Malawi, which now hosts more than a million refugees — a tenth of its total population. In Nsanje, southern Malawi, the refugee population now constitutes more than 60 percent of the total population.

Mozambican refugees who cross through the main entry point of Junction Gate, Zimbabwe, must now travel another 400 kilometers, with UNHCR help, before reaching a camp at Nyagombe. Camps closer to the border — Chambuta or Tongogara, for example — are closed to new arrivals because of a lack of water.

But even Nyagombe's ability to take in new arrivals is threatened by the drought, which is drying up the nearby river for the first time in memory. "The Nyagombe River historically never dries up," an administrator at the camp said in mid-October. "Now, it may last another two weeks or so. What will then happen?"

Boreholes are hurriedly being drilled in search of new supplies. But in Changambika, Malawi, 11 of 19 wells have dried up and the remainder are at dangerously low levels.

The drought is hitting nationals as hard as refugees. In Malawi, UNHCR has had to reduce the refugees' food rations by 10 percent so supplies can be shared with drought-affected Malawians.

Some 45,000 tons of maize have been loaned to the Government of Malawi for distribution to its citizens.

Between 3 million and 4 million people are at risk of immediate starvation, a third of the population.

For the first time, warehouses in Malawi are being looted by desperate, hungry people.

**BRINK OF DISASTER**

But it is in Mozambique itself that the situation is most desperate. There, everyone is on the move, searching for food and water and fleeing violence, lawlessness and hunger. Devastated by 16 years of war and the worst drought in its history, Mozambique is on the verge of becoming the next Somalia. Between 3 million and 4 million people are at risk of immediate starvation, a third of the population.

People trek for days to reach the relative safety of the Beira, Tete and Limpopo corridors, three tiny stretches of road open to traffic and relief assistance from the outside. Makeshift camps of starving, displaced people have sprung up spontaneously all along the Beira corridor over the past few months. Everyone has a tragic story to tell — of relatives left behind because they were too weak to travel, of children who died during the trek. The scale of the disaster may never be known. And the dying goes on. None of the camps has proper shelter or sanitation. Cholera is endemic.

Famine has hit all the provinces south of the Zambezia River, and fighting has extended it to many other provinces north of the waterway. The water level of the Zambezia, one of the biggest rivers in Africa, has dropped tenfold since the beginning of the drought. Most of the country's other rivers have already turned to sand.

Food is piling up in Mozambique's ports, but only a trickle is getting through to the millions of people who most desperately need it because the country's infrastructure has been destroyed: roads, airports, bridges, railways, electrical systems, hospitals, everything is in a shambles. This destruction and the poor security situation in much of the country have made more than 80 percent of Mozambique nearly inaccessible. To add insult to injury, customs authorities have increased by 250 percent customs fees at ports and airports.

The only way to supply food and other commodities to most of the country is by plane. But Mozambique's few remaining landing strips are incapable of handling anything larger than a three-ton cargo plane. In comparison, 40-ton aircraft are being used for airlifting food into famine-stricken Somalia.

In Mozambique, crowds of hungry people converge on landing strips as soon as they hear the drone of an approaching plane. The airlifted food disappears as soon as it is off-loaded from the aircraft, which sits on the tarmac with its engines roaring. On the tarmac, children with protruding bones and empty bellies pick up in their tiny hands the few grains of maize left behind.

United Nations officials estimate that no more than 25 percent of the needs are being met along the Beira corridor, the most accessible area in the country.

Says Jana Webb, World Vision coordinator in Changara, Mozambique: "Children from nearby villages come to our supplementary feeding centers. They stay here eight weeks and then return home. Soon after, we see them back at the feeding center as the child's health condition deteriorates due to the lack of food. It's a vicious circle."

Suzanne, a mother of two, has already seen her first child die of hunger. Her other child, a 3-year-old girl, is the size of a 1-year-old. She has been under supplementary feeding four times.

The water situation is just as critical as the food shortage in Mozambique. As dams have dried up, Chimoio, the capital of Manica Province, has been without water for more than a month. The level of Pungue River has dropped so low that it is becoming filled with salt water from the sea. In Chicualacuala, Gaza Province, water must be brought in by railway from Chokwe, some 370 kilometers south of the city. Still, only half of the city's water needs are being met. Residents must walk 20 kilometers down a steep valley under a scorching sun to collect water, which they carry on their backs.

About 90 percent of all agricultural projects have been shut down by war and drought.

"Things will get worse before they get better," said Yilma Makonnen, UNHCR representative in Malawi. "The signing of the peace agreement will

certainly enable some refugees to return spontaneously to their villages of origin and thousands of Mozambicans to move to areas where food is available.

"However, as food reaches only but a few people inside Mozambique, the tip of the iceberg, refugees will continue to flow into Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to look for food and water," he said. "When the rains eventually come, the harvest will be very poor as most villagers have abandoned their homes and lost their land.

Last but not least, the prospect of a ceasefire can augur an era of renewed fighting as warring factions grab land or settle old scores." The signing of the peace agreement has brought an air of optimism and some Mozambicans are once again looking forward to the future. Refugees in Malawi feel the burden of an unproductive life and are keen to return home. "We are doing nothing here, the land is on the other side," said one refugee. "We know there are problems, but we want to return."

**Marwan Elkhoury**

# Somali refugee crisis spills into Yemen

Two grueling sea journeys to Yemen by thousands of Somalis, risking their lives to escape war and famine, made headlines worldwide and drew attention to a little known country struggling with a massive influx of refugees and returnees.

In the first large-scale sea exodus from Somalia last June, 3,400 asylum-seekers aboard the Gob Wein endured temperatures that reached 50 C. while their vessel wandered the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden for 16 days.

The passengers watched helplessly as more than 100 fellow Somalis — many of them women and children — died from heat, dehydration and hunger.

In desperation, they forced the ship's captain to steer the vessel aground outside the Yemeni port of Aden. But before the rescue operation could be completed, 50 more people were killed in the mad scramble to swim ashore to Heswa beach.

Five months later, in a plight reminiscent of the Gob Wein incident, an estimated 3,300 Somalis crammed aboard the cargo ship Samaa-I and fled their homeland in early November.

After waiting four days in the Somali port of Marka, 125 kilometers south of Mogadishu, the ship took to the seas. Twelve days later, the exhausted but elated refugees cheered as their vessel pulled into the port of Aden.

Refugee workers on the spot were relieved to find that the majority of the survivors managed to walk off the Samaa-1 unassisted. What could have resulted in tragedy had a happy ending, thanks in part to the assistance provided to the refugees along the way by Yemeni and French authorities.

The steady stream of new arrivals in Yemen underscores the continual deterioration of Somalia. The influx also shows how all too frequently in the developing world, impoverished countries — by virtue of their proximity — end up taking in the destitute from even poorer nations.

Yemen is now sheltering more than 50,000 Somalis. The numbers are not staggering in light of the magnitude of the current Somali refugee exodus of more than 1 million. But Yemen is one of the poorest countries on earth and is struggling with unification after years of division.

Until the Somali asylum-seekers started crossing the Gulf of Aden, the refugee population in Yemen consisted of several hundred Ethiopians tucked away in two small camps.

The first wave of Somalis to seek refuge were of Yemeni ancestry. They had relatives or acquaintances with whom to stay. As the situation worsened early this year, Somalis with no ties to Yemen began arriving.

Around the same time, the Yemeni economy was forced to absorb an estimated 1 million Yemeni citizens expelled from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries in the aftermath of the Gulf War.

The economy is in a shambles and the unemployment rate in the nation's capital has topped 40 percent.

"Their own people were living in tents along the roads," said Kamal Morjane, director of UNHCR's Bureau for South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. Morjane saw the Yemeni returnee camps on a drive from Sana'a to Aden while in Yemen to negotiate the disembarkation of the Gob Wein passengers.

UNHCR's emergency response on

land to the newest arrivals was swift and efficient.

The evacuation of the 3,300 Somalis from the Samaa-I and their transfer to a temporary beach camp set up by UNHCR were completed within five hours after the vessel docked at Aden.

"We were extremely pleased with the success of the operation," said Carlos Zaccagnini, who heads UNHCR's operation in Aden, as he stood on the empty refugee ship scattered with debris after the last passenger had disembarked.

Experience from the earlier Gob Wein tragedy had enabled the Aden team to be fully prepared for the new arrivals aboard the Samaa-I.

It was the delay in disembarking the Gob Wein passengers that gave UNHCR time to have a temporary camp set up on the beach at Heswa — exactly in front of the ship that brought the refugees from Somalia.

"The short-term response was very effective," said Filippo Grandi, who was dispatched to Yemen in June to assist in setting up emergency accommodation for the refugees on the beach.

"People had shelter right away. There was an adequate water supply. They had cooked food. Latrines were built immediately. Stocks in the gulf were quickly diverted to Yemen. Médecins Sans Frontières immediately sent staff to assist those who required medical attention," Grandi said.

Grandi is one of five officers in UNHCR's Emergency Response and Preparedness Section set up under the leadership of High Commissioner Sadako Ogata to meet the urgent needs during the first few weeks of a refugee crisis.

The Gob Wein was evacuated on June 24, but the refugees' misery did not end with their rescue.

By mid-summer, life at the Heswa beach camp began to show signs of normalcy. While children scampered about the beach and women tended to the very young and old, groups of men gathered in makeshift mosques constructed out of sheets draped over four poles stuck into the sand.

But by early September, heavy rains and the dangers of a flash flood at Heswa beach uprooted the refugees again.

They were moved to Medinat al Shaab, another emergency camp near Aden set up for 4,500 people but already housing 7,000 Somalis. There, the survivors of the Gob Wein, along with the newest arrivals, were to wait for a more permanent camp.

Work is now underway on the new site. It is called Motalla'a, and Daniel Mora-Castro, UNHCR's veteran water development expert, is very excited about the site.

"It's like an oasis," said Mora-Castro, who has visited nearly every proposed UNHCR refugee camp site around the globe. "There is brown desert all around. And all of a sudden, you see a green patch. That's Motalla'a."

The site is near a former resort for laborers, is accessible by first-class road and has electricity.

The camp's water needs will be met thanks to the drilling of three wells, free of charge, by a consortium of oil firms led by Nabors Oil Co.

In addition, the terrain's gradual slope is excellent for drainage — a key concern for a water expert evaluating a potential refugee camp site. "It is almost an ideal site," says Mora-Castro.

The first group of refugees is expected to be able to move into the new facility in the next few months. The camp is being designed to accommodate the more than 10,000 Somalis now at Medinat al Shaab, with plans to expand it for 25,000.

UNHCR is also trying to arrange the transfer to another site of some 900 Ethiopians of Somali origin from a camp it has declared unacceptable at Al Hamili in western Yemen.

Mora-Castro describes the arid and inhospitable area at Al Hamili, where the refugees live in very harsh conditions, as "the most terrible place on earth."

But UNHCR cannot move them immediately. The same hatred that is turning Somalia into an anarchic no-man's land makes it impossible to house the different groups of refugees together — even in exile.

In a mountainous area west of Al Hamili, meanwhile, a group of 500 former Ethiopian soldiers who occupy a very spartan but orderly facility refuses to live peacefully with rival Ethiopians. Again, separate solutions must be found.

In the meantime, there are no signs of an end to the Somali crisis. Irregular but steady groups of Somali boat people continue to arrive on the shores of southern Yemen.

"According to the new arrivals, approximately 5,000 other Somalis are waiting in the northern Somali port of Bossaso to cross over to Yemen," said Taoufik Ouanes, UNHCR's representative in Yemen. "Their arrival will depend on developments in Somalia and on the availability of boats from Mogadishu and Bossaso."

Yemeni authorities have agreed to keep the country's doors open to the newcomers provided that UNHCR assist them fully.

**Marie Okabe**

ISSUES

# International r
# refugees in histori

# migrants and cal perspective

*(First of two parts)*

The emergence of powerful European states in the 15th century inaugurated a distinctive era in the history of human migrations. The conquest by the Europeans of the New World, their success in linking all the world's oceans into a continuous network of transportation, and their aggressive pursuit of commercial hegemony, had the effect of incorporating the world's population into a single migratory system, bringing about unprecedented encounters between very different groups widely separated in space. This process steadily expanded geographically and quantitatively, down to our own time. Its history can be divided into three epochs, each of which produced distinctive patterns of economic and political migrations.

In the era of absolutism and mercantilism (16th to 18th centuries), population grew very slowly and was considered a scarce economic and military resource. European rulers sought to confine their subjects within their territory, but at the same time tried to acquire valuable populations from other states, or from what constituted for them the external world. The primitive conditions of long-distance transportation rendered independent undertakings to relocate very difficult.

There was little international movement of labor within Europe, but its outward expansion produced two large transoceanic migrations: the relocation of some 2 to 3 million Europeans in the New World colonies, most as bound laborers, and the importation of an estimated 7.5 million West Africans as plantation slaves, initially to islands adjoining Europe itself, and then to the New World as well. Africa was already the major source of slave labor for the Islamic world, and continued to play this role well into the 20th century.

The New World further attracted independent European migrants from the middling classes of society; but governments sought to restrict these movements to avoid colonial competition with the metropole, as well as to insure the colonies' political reliability. In North America, the imposition by France of rigid controls prevented the development of a viable colony altogether, whereas Britain's looser policy did foster independent settlement and economic growth, but resulted in the transformation of the colonists into competitors, who eventually challenged the metropole's political authority.

Despite the positive value placed on human resources, the pursuit of religious uniformity as an instrument of state hegemony occasionally prompted rulers to eject populations, or to persecute them to the point of precipitating their flight. The new element was not persecution, but rather the targeting of large groups. The series began with the expulsion of the unconverted Jews from Spain in 1492, and continued in the next century with that of the *moriscos* of Arab descent. From the 1560s onward Spanish authorities attempted to contain a rebellion in the southern Low Countries (today's Belgium) by exiling Protestants, many of whom were prominent in the region's manufacturing and commerce. The Tudors exiled Irish Catholic lites while Cromwell deported many Irish to the West Indies; and the application of the principle *cuius regio, eius religio* triggered innumerable forced population exchanges

among the German principalities. The last massive wave consisted of some 200,000 Huguenots who fled France when Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685.

### SECOND EPOCH

The second epoch was inaugurated by the industrial, democratic, and demographic revolutions of the late 18th century. The interaction of rapid population growth with the dynamics of capitalism massively propelled Europe's rural populations in search of work. Overseas, there were now a number of independent countries or self-governing colonies under the control of people of European descent, eager to secure settlers and workers. On the European side, these developments prompted governments to relinquish traditional prohibitions on emigration, which came to be viewed as a way of lowering welfare burdens and as a safety valve in the face of social unrest. Concomitantly, "freedom to leave" was recognized as a human right.

Overall, gross emigration from Europe overseas grew from a mere 120,000 in the first decade of the 19th century to about 8.5 million in the last, for a total of some 29 million. Initially the major source was the United Kingdom, but in 1854 arrivals in the United States from Germany surpassed those originating in the British Isles, and by the 1870s many were coming from southern and eastern Europe as well.

In the early part of the century, most of those who went overseas settled there permanently. But with the generalization of railroads and transatlantic steamships, which steadily lowered the duration and cost of relocation, many from the less developed countries of Europe went as temporary workers rather than as permanent settlers. Labor migrations from low- to high-wage countries were becoming common within Europe as well: from Ireland to Britain, from Italy, Spain, and Belgium to France, from Italy to Switzerland, from Poland to Germany. Welcomed by employers because foreign labor was cheap and exerted downward pressure on wages, as well as because the workers could be expelled when no longer needed, this type of migration tended to provoke sharply negative reactions among threatened native workers. Moreover, the comings and goings left a residue of permanent settlement, which evoked opposition on the part of nationalist lites concerned to preserve the established cultural order. A variety of measures were devised to regulate the flows so as to minimize settlement which can be viewed as the ancestors of recent "guestworker" programs.

The economic transformation of Europe also induced new migrations in other parts of the world. Industrialization and the growth of a large consumer market expanded the demand for tropical commodities, most of which were produced on plantations that required a steady and massive infusion of disciplined labor, as well as for minerals, which generated the same imperative. After the abolition of the African slave trade and subsequently of slavery itself under pressure from reformers, British plantation owners in the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean recruited workers under indenture from India. Welcomed by imperial authorities as a way of reducing social tensions in India itself, this migration was extended later on to southeast Asia, southern and eastern Africa, and even colonies of other European powers. In Cuba, African slaves were replaced by Chinese "coolies," who were also imported into California, British Columbia, Australia, and various South American countries to build railroads and other major public works. Concurrently, Chinese traders expanded their activities to all of colonial southeast Asia, with a resulting proliferation of immigrant Chinese communities. After the conquest and partition of Africa, Europeans also stimulated large intra-African migrations, usually involving a substantial element of coercion, to provide labor for their mines and plantations.

The conflicts associated with the democratic and national revolutions fostered a distinctive type of refugees based on political opinion and class affiliation. The most notorious of the early waves are the *émigrés* who escaped the French Terror. But the American Revolution triggered a much larger flow in relation to population size, involving "Tory" partisans of continued British rule, many of whom were relocated in Canada. The comings and goings of political refugees became commonplace throughout the 19th century, mostly from the ranks of defeated revolutionary and nationalist movements. These exiles, who consisted usually of small numbers of educated professionals, easily found asylum among the emerging liberal regimes of Europe and America.

### THIRD EPOCH

The principal features of our own world began to emerge in the final decades of the 19th century. A major characteristic of this third epoch was the formation of a growing gap between a small number of capital-rich, technologically advanced, and militarily powerful countries — European or of European origin plus Japan — and the rest of the world. Concurrently, the demographic expansion of the advanced countries slowed down, whereas that of the others speeded up; Europe reached its historical maximum proportion of world population around World War I, and the United States and Japan around 1950. In most of the developing world, the rate of population growth outpaced that of economic expansion, so that despite substantial achievements, massive poverty persisted. Human mobility was further facilitated by the development of the automobile and the airplane, while the spread of written as well as later on electronic media rendered information about world conditions available to all. Consequently, the poor were more willing and better able to relocate within and outside their country in quest of a better life. The worldwide pool of potential migrants expanded dramatically and became yet more heterogeneous.

In response to what they perceived as a threat of invasion by a multitude of poor strangers, many of whom belonged to what prevailing ideologies defined as "undesirable" or "racially inferior" groups, the affluent states instituted more effective border controls and imposed severe limits on entry for purposes of permanent settlement. Around the turn of the 20th century, the overseas countries governed by people of European descent adopted draconian measures to prevent further immigration of any kind from Asia, while Germany and Britain undertook to prevent the entry of Jews from eastern Europe. Although in the United States attempts were also launched at this time to deter immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, who were said to be unwilling or unable to become American, the restrictionists took nearly a quarter of a century to achieve their objectives. Meanwhile, the transatlantic traffic reached unprecedented heights.

World War I and the Soviet Revolution prompted a further reinforcement of controls and restrictions on grounds of national security. By the 1920s, most receiving states in Europe and overseas had erected solid walls, with well-policed narrow gates to provide for temporary workers, and in the case of the overseas countries, family members of previous immigrants as well as a small number of new settlers, preferably from the "founding" nationalities. Taken together, these enactments formed a world-wide international migration regime, still largely in effect today. An additional feature of the régime was the elaboration by the 20th century's authoritarian states of draconian barriers against exit, to prevent their populations from "voting with their feet" against the political régime and from undermining its economic policies. Consequently, for many decades a substantial proportion of the world's population was prevented from entering into the migration stream. *(End of Part One)*

**Aristide R. Zolberg**
*New School for Social Research*

# The emerging politics of non-entrée

In formal terms, international refugee law is premised on respect for the norm of *non-refoulement*, that is, that refugees should not be returned either directly or indirectly to their state of origin. If we examine the current practice of states, particularly but not exclusively those in the developed world, we can see however that *non-refoulement* is being displaced by a new norm of *non-entrée*: the refugee shall not access our community.

The tools of *non-entrée* vary widely: most European and North Ameri-

can states impose visa requirements abetted by carrier sanctions, which effectively mean that airline and other transportation company employees do the dirty work of deterrence at the point of embarkation; some states, like Austria, even station armed guards at the borders with instructions to turn refugee claimants away. More pernicious, however, is the new generation of tools of isolation, including the processing of Haitian asylum-seekers at the Guantanamo military base in Cuba; the creation of a Kurdish "safe haven" within Iraq, coupled with an all-too-temporary "Operation Comfort"; or the legal fiction of an "international zone" at French airports in which refugees are denied legal rights.

Why is *non-entrée* effectively replacing *non-refoulement* as the cornerstone of contemporary international law regarding refugees? From the perspective of states, its appeal is that it permits states to exercise *control* over refugee movements without also assuming *responsibility* for their welfare, as admission to that state's community would imply.

From a historical perspective, it is clear that international refugee law was never intended to cope with the kinds of forced migration taking place today. Until the large-scale South to North movements of people began in the 1970s, refugee law had addressed itself only to persons who were in some sense ethnically or politically related to their communities of destination. Because of the "relatedness" of the refugees and the communities in which they sought protection, the arrival of refugees was essentially supportive of the *status quo* social order. In some cases, like the migration of refugees from communist states to the West, refugees were even useful pawns in the war of propaganda.

Where there was no "relatedness" between refugees and the power holders in their intended states of destination, refugee law simply didn't — and doesn't — work. The racist refusal of Western states to recognize Jews and other minorities in flight from Naziism as refugees in the years leading up to the Second World War is a clear case in point. Moreover, when the still-in-force 1951 Refugee Convention was drafted, there was one large non-European refugee group in territory within striking distance of the West: the Palestinians in the Middle East. The solution? They were and are explicitly and formally barred from claiming refugee status under Article 1, Paragraph D, of the Convention. Since the drafting of the Convention in 1951, however, international politics and modern transportation technology have combined to prompt the migration to the North of what appear to the governments of developed states to be large numbers of culturally, racially, politically, and economically divergent refugees. Their arrival is complicated by the formal extension of refugee law to non-European refugees through the 1967 Protocol, which affords a minimal, albeit anachronistic and culturally foreign, basis to claim a right to seek protection.

Why is *non-entrée* effectively replacing *non-refoulement* as the cornerstone of contemporary international law regarding refugees?

It is the "differentness" of these refugees, not just their numbers, which troubles Northern governments. Authorities argue, increasingly openly, that the admission of counter-entropic minorities threatens the social solidarity of communities in developed states, and can therefore legitimately be resisted. Unwilling to be seen formally to renounce their commitment to refugee law, yet concerned about the negative social consequences of influx, states have increasingly looked to *non-entrée* schemes as a means of avoiding conflict between the legal rhetoric of commitment and social antipathy towards outsiders.

**James C. Hathaway**
*Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto*

# Life on the edge

I awake atop the airport luggage belt to the sound of an armored personnel carrier (APC) grinding past the building. Sarajevo airport is a far cry from a Holiday Inn, but I'd rather sleep surrounded by sand bags than in the city's bullet-riddled four-star hotel.

Crawling out of my sleeping bag, I don my flak jacket and take my helmet in hand for the walk to UNHCR's hangar. I notice the effects of last night's bombardment: new shell holes in the tarmac and the shattered windows of the terminal building. My morning wash, a splash of cold water, takes seconds.

I then hop into a Ukrainian APC to ride out to Kiseljak where I'll meet the Swedish and U.K. convoys waiting on the far side of the Serbian lines. The short ride will take me out of Sarajevo to the relative calm of the pockmarked suburbs.

The drivers are a little nervous, but their team leaders tell them that Sarajevo is quiet today. Once the APCs are in position we move out. At the first Serbian checkpoint all the vehicles are inspected: only humanitarian aid can pass through the lines.

The Serbs interpret humanitarian aid strictly. Today, one of the U.K. drivers has two loaves of bread for his lunch. After five minutes of debate he's allowed to keep his bread.

Other drivers are carrying mail for people in Sarajevo. It's not allowed, but the drivers sometimes say "yes" when begged to bring letters to people who have been isolated for months. The Serbs aren't so benevolent. The letters they find are opened and read before the convoy can pass.

As we head into the city, the first humanitarian supply plane of the day —Canadian— lands at the airport. We are now picking up speed and our trucks roll through "Sniper Alley." Humanitarian aid trucks are not armored and the drivers, even with their flak jackets, know how vulnerable they are perched high up in the cabs.

We head straight to the old customs warehouse by the railroad station and begin unloading. Everyone lends a hand so the trucks can get out of town as quickly as possible.

Many people wait on the edge of the lot. They aren't there to pounce on the food, but hold letters they want the drivers to carry out of the city. The drivers refuse to carry the mail, but some promise to telephone relatives. The disappointed people will be back tomorrow. They understand the situation we're in, but beg, "only once for me."

As we leave town the queue at the broken water pipe has grown longer. The shallow line was hit by several shells, and water leaks out. Without electricity there's no water pressure in the city, so people survive by collecting water from low-lying sources like this.

The siege has turned the economy into a simple barter system, where a few possessions can mean the difference between life and death. Plastic bottles are collector's items. A wheelbarrow is worth a fortune, and chainsaws cannot be bought. The hillsides surrounding the city are naked, and trees in the city parks are being chopped down.

I am back at the airport by noon. So far, six planes have arrived. A British Hercules taxis to a halt, its engines roaring while it is unloaded. The noise from the aircraft is tremendous and everyone is forced to talk with their hands. Twelve minutes later the plane is back in the air for another load.

During the pause before the next flight, we sit down for lunch: another meal of field rations.

UNHCR has a staff of about 20 people here at the airport, all local Muslims, Croats and Serbs. Everyone gets along fine. Just as I start to eat, some mortars land on the far side of the runway. It won't stop the planes from landing. Everything is relative in Sarajevo — including danger.

During the afternoon I calculate deliveries of goods to the local communities. Everything has to be divided exactly. The warring parties are suspicious and always believe that others are getting more than their share.

By early evening we have the trucks loaded for tomorrow's deliveries. Once all the work is finished, the one operable telephone is monopolized by the local staff to call their friends and family. They cannot go home at night because of the danger, so they all sleep in the left-luggage room in the terminal.

One of my drivers has had the last two days off for his grandmother's funeral. He calls in tonight to say that the ceremony has been postponed again. Today, the mourners were sniped at as they entered the park now serving as a graveyard. They will try again tomorrow.

While everyone makes his call, Amra, my logistics assistant, enters the data from today's incoming trucks and planes. A very good day for UNHCR, 244 metric tons carried by the brave pilots and drivers. A satcom call from Zagreb brings the news that we'll have 15 planes tomorrow.

Shelling begins to pick up outside as the night fighters awaken. We all move to the terminal building where it's safer. I get my bedroll ready, putting my helmet and flak jacket on one side and my dirty clothes on the other.

The local staff talk in low voices. They listen to the noisy shelling. "Close to my home..." says one. "Where my parents live..." whispers another. The noise of shelling and machine-gun fire mixed with snoring is my last impression before I fall sleep.

**Dag Espeland**
*UNHCR Sarajevo*

# The last stage in a long journey

They have come a long way, the 6,000 families and 12,000 unaccompanied minors from Sudan who recently settled at Kenya's newest refugee camp at Kakuma.

Forced to wander for years between Sudan and Ethiopia, the mostly male population aged six to 18 had reached northwestern Kenya just south of the Sudanese border in late May.

But two months later, they were again uprooted. Their transfer to Kakuma, nearly 100 kilometers further south, was completed by late August.

The mostly young Sudanese refugees are Christians and belong to the Dinka ethnic group. Most of them left Sudan and the war five or six years ago. While they were in refugee camps in Ethiopia, they received a solid education.

The last stage of their long journey began when they were expelled from Ethiopia in June 1991 after the fall of Haile Mariam Mengistu. The youngest were grouped together in Pakok and Nasir in Sudan.

The International Action Against Hunger (IAAH), a French humanitarian organization specializing in nutrition and water supply, was there to look after them.

IAAH workers gave the boys food and drinking water and cared for the wounded.

Created in 1979 by Françoise Giroud, French journalist and former minister, IAAH has 100 volunteers — physicians, nurses, engineers, hydraulics experts, nutritionists, agronomists and logistics experts. They work in 15 developing countries to combat hunger.

IAAH attaches particular importance to training. In the field, its volunteers are teaching more than 1,000 people to help them take over once the emergency is over.

IAAH's mission is twofold: emergency and development.

Together with UNHCR, IAAH works first of all in emergency situations, and its volunteers will soon be in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

For several months they have been in Kenya helping the young Sudanese refugees.

The International Committee of the Red Cross had accompanied these minors during their long walk to Narus in Sudan, where IAAH took over. With a team of two physicians and two logistics experts, IAAH provided medicine, dug wells, built latrines and started a nutrition program.

But then it was time to leave again, another long walk in order to keep ahead of the unstoppable advance of the troops from the north.

In May, they were again looked after by the IAAH in the Lokichokio transit camp in Kenya.

Two months later, they traveled the 94 kilometers from Lokichokio to their latest destination, Kakuma, in trucks.

Resourceful, the children have rebuilt their native tukuls, small huts made of bamboo. They have crafted toy trucks and vehicles out of used metal cans and fashioned crude soccer balls out of scrap pieces of cloth. In the evening, the camp is illuminated by little brushwood fires on which the refugees boil beans provided by the World Food Program.

Using funds from UNHCR, the IAAH teams have organized the sanitary facilities at the camp: 2,500 family latrines are being built. Water is pumped from three boreholes situated outside the camp, and piped into storage tanks from where it is distributed through stand-pipes.

IAAH is also repairing the hospital and building a cultural center.

The Sudanese at Kakuma are only a fraction of the more than 400,000 refugees — mostly from Somalia — who have fled to Kenya.

Intervention by the international community must continue so that the desperate wanderings of a people forgotten, destroyed by war and famine, can be ended.

**Nathalie Duhamel**
*Director of Communication*
*International Action against Hunger*

# President Richard von Weizsäcker awarded 1992 Nansen Medal

When intense attacks against asylum-seekers erupted in Germany in the autumn of 1991, Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker knew he had to use the moral force of his office against the perpetrators.

The 72-year-old leader visited the victims — the first German politician to do so — in a widely publicized attempt to demonstrate solidarity.

"Attacks against foreigners and their lodgings are unbearable," the German president said. "Racist and anti-Semitic aggression strikes us with indignation. Those who pretend to resort to such violence in the interest of Germany abuse the name of our nation."

On 26 October, President von Weizsäcker received the prestigious 1992 Nansen Medal for his unwavering stand against all forms of intolerance and xenophobia and his support for the cause of refugees.

During the award ceremony in Bonn, High Commissioner Sadako Ogata lauded the president for his "leadership, vision and commitment."

"With outstanding clarity and forthrightness, President von Weizsäcker has sought to sensitize the German people to the root causes underlying population displacement," Mrs. Ogata said. "President Dr. von Weizsäcker has tried to rouse an affluent German nation to its role and responsibility in alleviating the plight of the distressed and the dispossessed around the globe."

President von Weizsäcker described the Nansen Medal as a "great honor" and said Germany felt a "deep obligation to do our best to fight deprivation and to help refugees." He noted that Germany has admitted more refugees than any other European country.

"Every human being has dignity regardless of beliefs, skin color, culture or passport," he said.

The Nansen Medal has been awarded 33 times since 1954. It is named after Norwegian diplomat and explorer Fridtjof Nansen, the first High Commissioner for Refugees under the League of Nations. The award is aimed at mobilizing support of the international community for the uprooted.

President von Weizsäcker was born April 15, 1920. After studies at Oxford and Grenoble, he took up law and history at the University of Göttingen. Until 1976, he occupied leading positions in industry and banking. He was a member of parliament from 1969-81 and was mayor of Berlin from 1981-84.

Since taking office as president of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1984, he has been viewed as the moral conscience of the nation. He has never shied away from taking a stand on controversial political and domestic issues.

The German leader's use of symbolism in promoting the cause of the refugees and the displaced is widely known. He recently made a spontaneous visit to the boat people of Somalia who were stranded in Yemen. That gesture focused world attention on the plight of Somalis fleeing famine and war in their country.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Actress Sophia Loren chosen as Goodwill Ambassador

PHOTO UNHCR A HOLMANN

HIGH COMMISSIONER Sadako Ogata has appointed actress Sophia Loren as UNHCR's newest Goodwill Ambassador.

Miss Loren was scheduled to make a six-day trip to the Horn of Africa beginning 21 November to help focus public attention on the massive refugee crisis in the region.

"Sophia Loren has expressed great concern for the situation in the Horn of Africa, where a lethal combination of tribal warfare, anarchy and a prolonged drought-induced famine has created one of the worst humanitarian disasters of our time," Mrs. Ogata said.

## French Minitel introduces UNHCR file

MORE THAN 20 million French now have access to the latest refugee news at their fingertips.

By dialing 3615 HCR, French users of Minitel, a video data bank linked to the nation's telephone system, can learn about refugee crises around the world, from Afghanistan to former Yugoslavia, 24 hours a day.

The service, which started on Oct. 12, is part of UNHCR's public awareness campaign in France.

In the first week alone, more than 200 calls were made to access UNHCR information.

Users are offered tips on how they can help refugees — from creating local refugee associations to donating money for UNHCR activities.

## Vatican document supports world's displaced, refugees

THE VATICAN recently issued a 25-page document calling for international solidarity with the world's millions of refugees and displaced people.

The document, titled "Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity," was issued at the request of Pope John Paul II by the Pontifical Council "*Cor Unum*" and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.

Distributed to Roman Catholics worldwide, the document reaffirms the priority and dignity of the human being and calls on those responsible for the care of refugees to show imagination and courage in seeking just and durable solutions to their plight.

It also reminds governments that protection "is not a simple concession made to the refugee: he is not an object of assistance, but rather a subject of rights and duties. Each country has the responsibility to respect the rights of refugees and assure that they are respected as much as the rights of its own citizens."

The document notes the work on behalf of refugees by several international, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and singles out UNHCR for "special recognition."

"Human solidarity, as witnessed by any community that welcomes refugees and by the commitment of national and international organizations that care for them, is a source of hope for the real possibility of living together in fraternity and peace," the document concludes.

## More than 16,000 Iraqis voluntarily repatriate

MORE THAN 16,000 Iraqi refugees, the majority of them Kurds, have voluntarily left Turkey to return to villages rehabilitated by UNHCR and its partners in the wake of the Gulf war.

"A little more than 1,500 remain of the 50,000 to 60,000 people who fled persecution in northern Iraq in 1988," said Dario Carminato, UNHCR's deputy representative in Turkey.

Many of the returnees' mountain villages in northern Iraq were destroyed in armed attacks by the Iraqi government, which had set out to create a 30-kilometer no-man's zone along the Turkish-Iraqi border.

Under the ongoing UNHCR-assisted repatriation program, the returnees are being given a four months' supply of food, cash entitlements of up to $200 per family and shelter materials to help restart their lives.

In addition to the 1988 caseload, Turkey is also host to an estimated 3,400 Iraqi refugees who were part of the mass exodus from Iraq in March 1991. They were driven from their homes after President Saddam Hussein crushed a Kurdish uprising against him in the wake of the Gulf War.

About 1,000 of the latter caseload have been offered resettlement opportunities by Canada, Australia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

## Former High Commissioner dies

FORMER UNITED Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Felix Schnyder died on 8 November. He was 82.

In a letter of condolence to his wife, Sigrid, High Commissioner Sadako Ogata said she was saddened to learn of Schnyder's passing.

"Mr. Schnyder's wise and able stewardship of UNHCR from December 1960 through December 1965 is still remembered and made a most substantial contribution to the formation of the institution which UNHCR is today, over two decades later," she said.

"Your husband's devotion to humanitarian causes and especially that of refugees, as well as his compassion for those in need, will always be remembered by those who had the privilege to know him."

UNHCR and the world's [illegible] million refugees would like to thank those who have contributed so generously. Among the thousands who reached deep into their own pockets were:

Marcel Schmitt, *Fraize, France*
Jeremy Hein, *Eau Claire, Wisconsin*
Nguyen Ngoc [illegible], *Vigneux-sur-Seine*
Fredy Lukombo, *Swisttal-Heimerz, Germany*
Madelaine Whitfield, *Ottawa*
Lila McDermott, *Santa Rosa, California*
Nathalie Jegues, *Nice*
Micheline Beranger, *Lemoyne, Canada*
Sylvie Montagne, *Castres, France*
Le Minh Thao, *Trondheim, Norway*
Matthew Pavelich, *Ottawa*
Shirley Samaroo House of the City of York, *Weston, Ontario*
Joan McLean, *Scarborough*
Debbie Hathaway, *Ingersoll*
C. Bowling, *Mallorca*
Luis González Perdomo, *Santa Cruz de Tenerife*
Asociación CIEMEN, *Barcelona*
Asociación Justicia y Paz, *Barcelona*
Hitomi Nakamura, *Yokohama*
Yuji Yoshizaki, *Osaka*
Yukio Kato, *Aichi*
Hatsue Minami, *Nagano*
Junko [illegible]ita, *Tokyo*
Shuji [illegible]shita, *Tokyo*
Fuji Se[illegible]n Joshi Gakuin Libr[illegible]
Shinichi Kuramitsuk, *Hirosbi[illegible]*
Toshiaki Kobayashi, *Tokyo*
Teruko Maeda, *Chiba*
Michi[illegible]ro Sasaki, *Osaka*
Yoko Mizuno, *Tokyo*
Reiko Kudo, *Kanagawa*
Yoshi Sato, *Hachioji*
Sumi[illegible]shi, *Hachioji*
Akil[illegible], *Tokyo*
Mak[illegible], *Sapporo*
Shin[illegible]nagawa
Cons[illegible]enev[illegible]
Luigi [illegible]
Roberto [illegible]na
Gianluigi C[illegible]ati, *Bergamo*
Paola Carù, *Verona*
Sergio Clari, *Sondrio*
Luciano Dal Bianco, *Treviso*
Enrico Fergnani, *Bologna*
Michelangelo Filannino, *Bari*
Paolo Frigo, *Vicenza*
Giovanni Gulmanelli, *Ravenna*
Caterina Landolfi, *Roma*
Paolo Macconi, *Cremona*
Franco Magnani, *Grosseto*
Leonardo Capria Mamone, *A[illegible]*
Giorgio Martucci, *Brindisi*
Daniele Masiero, *Venez[illegible]*
Paolo Nasuti, *Padova*
Pio Pampaloni, *Padova*
Libero Ponticelli, *Milano*
Alessio Putti, *Firenze*
R.G.H. [illegible], *Cumbria*
B.J. O'Su[illegible], *Reading*
S.A. [illegible]
A.H. [illegible]
J. Harrisson, *Abingdon*
Platt, *Selby*
Rev. D.R.W. Hares, *Ipsw[illegible]*
Solidarité Libérale, *Bruxe[illegible]*
Marie Louise Boucher, *Le M[illegible]*
Marie Trigaux, *Lannion*
Louis le Noan, *Saint Brieuc*
Louis Redor, *Paris*
Jeannine Yves, *Sotteville les Rouen*
Jean Denoy, *Peyrefitte du Razes*
Jean Souile, *Albi*
Marie-Geneviève Dagain, *Gabre*
Barbara Ryckaert, *Calvire et Cuire*
Jean Blondel, *Sevssinet Pariset*

Mar[illegible] Cormier, *Saint Pierre, [illegible]*
[illegible]elle Voron, *Saint [illegible]*
[illegible] Bernard, *Saint Eti[illegible]*
Albert [illegible]affin Peyloz, *Excenevex*
[illegible]le Denervaud, *Chambéry*
André Saulière, *Tu[illegible]*
[illegible]ette Labanowsky, *Paris*
[illegible], *Remelange, Luxembourg*
Henri Cousin, *Bar sur Aube*
[illegible] Combe, *Saint Priest B[illegible]efay*
Jo[illegible]ssack, *Lawrenceville, Georgia*
[illegible]. Vogel, *Forest Park, Illinois*
[illegible]e R. Wilson, *Chicago, Illinois*
Patrick [illegible]ey, *New Heaven, Connecticut*
Joy[illegible] Biagin, *St. Paul, Minneapolis*
[illegible]d Sandler, *Evanston, Illinois*
[illegible]. Todd, *Kalamazoo, Mich[illegible]*
[illegible] Nicklas, *Falmouth, Maine*
[illegible]t M. Holland, *Akron, O[illegible]*
[illegible]rez, *Arcadia, Californ[illegible]*
[illegible], *Longboat Key, Flori[illegible]*
[illegible]iam & C[illegible]e Kramer, *Winnetka, Illi[illegible]*
LuAnn Jan[illegible]n, *Madison, Wisco[illegible]*
Donald J. Ca[illegible]ho, *Pasadena, Californ[illegible]*
Teresa R. Vin[illegible], *Springfield, Tenne[illegible]*
Peggy A. [illegible]mboza, *Cincinnati, [illegible]*
Joseph [illegible]. Bailey, *Orion, Mich[illegible]*
Eugene J. Janqui[illegible], *Green Bay, Wisco[illegible]*
Judith N. He[illegible], *Bethesda, Maryland*
Anne Mary Gamble, *New [illegible]lington, Pennsylvania*
Juan & Teresita [illegible]avedra, *Miami, Fl[illegible]*
Caroline [illegible]adley, *Washington, D.C.*
Victor Gladstone, *San Bruno, Californ[illegible]*
Ruth Samuelson, *Bethesda, Maryland*
Kate Hadley, *Washington, D.C.*
[illegible] Keough-Lavi, *Los Angeles, California*
[illegible]n L. Heffron, *Rochester, New York*
[illegible]e D. Silhavy, *Tolland, Connecticut*
[illegible]ra L. Morrison, *Washington, Iowa*
Ines [illegible]. Levison, *Reading, Massachusetts*
Jane A. Boyaji[illegible], *Seattle, Washington*
Rita Ge[illegible]ham, *Portland, Maine*
Dorothy K. Spie[illegible], *Boca Raton, Florida*
Faye Levy, *Chicago, Illinois*
Laura G. [illegible]andel, *Chicago, Illinois*
Mae A. Beebe, *Falmouth, Maine*
Ni Quang Du, *Mountain View, California*
Peggy Wades, *Nanticoke, Pennsylvania*
Christopher C. Diccianni, *Middletown, New York*
David A. Russell, *Dearborn, Michigan*
Rhymes Humphrey's, *Pitman, New Jersey*
Janet F. Breve, *Fort Lauderdale, Florida*
Abdullah Tolstoy, *Leesburg, New Jersey*
Mary Paige Hedges, *Charleston, West Virginia*
Dotty Cooley, *Houston, Texas*
Helen B. M[illegible]ks Waits, *Cincinnati, Ohio*
[illegible]el Sanchez Al-Hu[illegible], *Leesburg, New Jersey*
Janet L. Walker, *Hersbey, Pennsylvania*
Betty Westbour, *Clearwater, Florida*
Tom Carter, *Houston, Texas*
Jan C. Taylor, *Ann Arbour, Michigan*
Cathie Day, *Ellensburg, West Virginia*
[illegible]bag Ahmed, *Richland, West Virginia*
Lucille S. Curran, *Rib Lake, Wisconsin*
William M. Goofytoontz, *The Woodlands, Texas*
[illegible] E. Edwards, *Houston, Texas*
[illegible]ichael Foreman, *Chicago, Illinois*
[illegible]owski Diamond, *Chesapeake, Virginia*
[illegible]enhouse, *York, Pennsylvania*
G. Vi[illegible]a T[illegible]ner, *Bonneau, South Carolina*
[illegible] Steadland, *Gainsville, Florida*
[illegible]pp[illegible]heimer, *Coral Gables, Florida*
[illegible]argaret Gray, *Warren, Michigan*
[illegible] Z. Jupiter, *Bakersfield, California*
[illegible] E. Bleidorn, *Brookfield, Wisconsin*
[illegible]ne F. Butler, *Endwell, New York*

**A bundle of belongings isn't the only thing a refugee brings to his new country. Einstein was a refugee.**

UNHCR is the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Our job is to co-ordinate the world-wide efforts to solve refugee problems. To protect the basic human rights of refugees. The right to work, to education. Freedom of religion. Travel documents. Legal protection.

We do not ask your help to support refugees for ever and ever. We need your help to make refugees self-supporting. Living a useful, peaceful and happy life somewhere in the world. Just as you do.

**We need <u>your</u> help to help refugees.**

**UNHCR ACTION**
P.O. Box 2500 CH - 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees